Who Was Responsible?

Maggie Shaw-Fullilove

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Rev. J. N. C. Coggin,

Presented by

R. E. Fullilove, M.D.

Yazoo City, Miss

Jan. 19, 1922

INSCRIBED by The author's husband

M. S. F. (1884-1918)

34 years old

MAGGIE SHAW-FULLILOVE

Who Was Responsible?

BY
MAGGIE SHAW-FULLILOVE.

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Foreword

MAGGIE SHAW-FULLILOVE, the author of this story, was born in LaFayette County, Mississippi, January 27, 1884, and died in Yazoo City, Mississippi, October 30, 1918. She was the youngest daughter of Mrs. Maria Petty-Shaw and the Rev. D. P. Shaw, a preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Her parents were ex-slaves, without school advantages, but with such a passion for education as found fruitage in the college education for all their children.

Maggie Shaw was graduated from Rust University, Holly Springs, Mississippi, with the degree of A. B. in the class of 1907. Soon thereafter she was married to Dr. Robert E. Fullilove, who afterwards located in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Three children were born to that union. A faithful and devoted wife and mother, she nevertheless found time to give to the writing of short stories for publication in newspapers and magazines. Various stories with moral and religious messages, such as "Sweet Peas Between," "Navy Blue Velvet," "Pass It On," "The Making of Leon Tony," and "Sermons in Stones" came rapidly from her pen. She never wrote for mere entertainment. She was a gifted singer as well as writer, and employed her talents in the local church choir. She

lived a simple, unselfish, useful, and beautiful Christian life, and was an inspiration and a benediction to all who knew her.

This story is submitted to the reading public with the earnest hope that it may do its bit in crushing to the earth and keeping crushed the demon rum.

J. Beverly F. Shaw,
President Central Alabama College.

Birmingham, Alabama,
June 28, 1919.

Preface

I SUBMIT this book to the reading public with the earnest prayer and sincere hope that it may do its small share in arresting the tide of demoralization which some of the vices of society are spreading over the land.

THE AUTHOR.

Who Was Responsible?

CHAPTER I

A HANDSOME, middle-aged man stood looking out a window upon a street below. It was a fair street, extending north and south. The small but elegant mansions were placed each on its carpet of verdant grass, and a long flight of steps extended from every door to the pavement. Ornamental trees, the weeping mulberry, the tall maple, so lofty and bending, the graceful and gracious umbrella tree, the old-fashioned cedar, pearshaped and evergreen, grew thrivingly among brick and stone.

There were more streets running parallel to this one, but none equaled it in the grandeur of its aspect; for most of the aristocrats and the wealthiest people lived on this street. They called it College Street, so named because at the head of it, on a beautiful forty-acre campus, the college buildings stood—a strong, up-to-date institution, which appealed to the best class of young people, offering highest educational as well as social advantages. There was everything tending to the development of the ideal, capable young people. It was an ideal institution, and all things considered was as nearly perfect as the most considerate wisdom, benevolence, and humanity could make it. On account of its high literary and moral standard, it shed an atmosphere over the whole town, making it pure and clean.

It was a source of inexpressible pleasure to observe the almost imperceptible but none-the-less certain effect wrought by this institution upon the entire community of the small town of Hollyville; and to note the general humanizing tastes and desires it engendered, the affectionate friendships to which it gave rise, the amount of vanity and prejudice it dispelled.

Year after year it graduated young men and women of exceptional worthiness and capability, many of whom made their homes in the town of Hollyville.

All the citizens of the town took great pride in making it ideal in every respect. The town was beautiful and did not fail to impress all strangers very favorably. Its streets were kept clean of filth and dirt; and under the effect of local option, its business center was free from saloons and dives where young men are wont to linger in indolence and strife. There is no doubt that much of the intellectual refinement and superiority of the place was referable to the quiet influence of its institution of learning. The resident professors were gentlemen of learning and varied attainments, and were men who shed grace upon and did honor to the town.

Near the end of College Street the Drews lived—John Drew, the well-respected merchant of good character, and Robert Drew, the popular and much courted son. These two and a housekeeper comprised the inhabitants of the Drews' house. Though they failed to rank in wealth with the other dwellers of that street, they seemed to be the most favored. It was the recognized worth of private character

which exhorted this homage. John Drew, although a man of limited educational acquirements, adorned his station in life, dignified the mercantile profession, vindicated the dignity of common life, and carried a large, high, and noble spirit into ordinary affairs; made men recognize something inviolable even in common humanity—this was the power and attraction of John Drew's life. Robert, the son, was a general favorite in the community. Every mother and father of them loved the young man: every mother's son of them sought his wholesome companionship, while every fair daughter of them cast shy glances upon his promising, vigorous young manhood.

It was John Drew, the father, who stood looking out the window, as was mentioned in the beginning of the story. As he looked, there advanced a single passenger on its farthest extent—a fine young man of twenty-one, who hastened forward with swift, swinging stride, slapping his left hand with his folded gloves, thus keeping time with his buoyant, ringing steps. As he came nearer he raised his eyes to throw a glance upward at the waiting gentleman.

"What a fine fellow he is," thought John Drew, as he fondly noted the broad shoulders, the towering height, the fine, strong, clean-cut features; eyes which flashed the ardor of youth, a mouth that was firm and strong. John Drew smiled in satisfaction as he realized what a future was in store for his son. He loved this son with all his soul. Indeed, the emotion seemed more than love and was closely akin to worship. He had loved the boy's mother as few men love their wives. When she died in giving birth to

their son, at first he was crazed and wild with stubborn grief; but it was the boy who had brought back hope to his withered heart. It was the boy, a tiny mite of humanity, who grasped his big thumb in its firm baby fingers and led him back to life and love.

Since then he had lived, starved, striven, grappled with fate and conquered—all for the boy. Robert's deep love and devotion, his unbounded faith in the father, amply repaid all his parent's efforts, and made his paternal love and pride in his offspring an unbounded joy. In fact, the son electrified the father's world; the love of him was the lightning of his soul, illuminating his sky, clarifying the atmosphere of adversity, making every task delightful.

Robert paused before mounting the steps, looked up at his parent with remarkably bright and singularly sympathetic eyes; then, bounding up three steps at a time, he soon entered the room where John Drew awaited him.

"Well, Pater!"

"Well, Son!"

It was a simple greeting, yet each knew the full depth of the other's overcharged heart. There was little need of undue demonstration between these two. Each understood the other's eccentricity and respected it. Robert of twenty-one had outgrown those halcyon days of paper kites, toy boats, and knee-foot gallops to the market town. He had the same frank, boyish, open heart, was altogether adorable, yet withal he possessed a man's interests and capabilities.

"I've got a job, father." Robert paused in order to note the effect of his words, then continued: "I've

been employed as clerk in Morgan & Sons—New Gate."

"New Gate!" The father gasped. Of all the Southern cities, New Gate was the very last in which he wanted his son to reside. It was a city in which society was corrupt. The free flow of alcoholics had washed away almost every vestige of clean, chaste manhood and even womanhood. Ignorance and vice stalked abroad in the streets. There was no law against drunkenness; and as there was no penalty, no man feared to get drunk.

John Drew was disappointed—not that he did not want his son to work; and he knew that this was a splendid opportunity for a man who had an inclination toward the mercantile profession—yet he had secretly hoped that his boy might choose some other profession. A position in Hollyville College would have met his approval sooner.

"Pshaw! I'm a whiney old woman," he told himself a few moments later as he sat down alone to think over the situation. "I need not hope to keep my boy tied to my apron strings; yet he might have chosen a more lofty position. Of course any occupation is lofty so long as it is honorable. But somehow I've always pictured the lad at the head of some institution of learning."

Robert had graduated from Hollyville College with honors, had been a favorite as a student, and no doubt could have secured a good position in his Alma Mater. John Drew strongly disliked the idea of Robert's working at New Gate. No one knew the city and its history any better than he did. It had been

the home of his boyhood. He was acquainted with every dive, every hole and corner, every ill-reputed public house, every saloon—of the latter there were a great number. He could recall many unpleasant incidents connected with many of them. They had been his father's curse, had come near being his own curse, had it not been for the fact that Alice, Robert's mother, had led him away and taught him the value of love and home. He had shunned New Gate ever afterwards, as he would shun a black and fathomless pit which led to hell.

He sat there staring into the fire, his mind worked up into a sort of frenzy at the thought of Robert's going there to work—his boy, who had been brought up almost entirely without any knowledge of alcoholics. John Drew had been very careful about this thing. He had been careful not to even warn the youngster against it, for fear that he might try it out of mere curiosity. Curiosity had been one of the lad's weaknesses. He could recall many incidents of Robert's childhood which verified this. John Drew felt that it was better not to spend too much time warning him against the evil effects of alcohol, because he felt sure that Robert would try it just to see if it would in truth have the reputed effect. And John Drew feared that if he should taste it once, he'd taste it again and again; for was not his boy in danger according to the law of heredity? John Drew shuddered. His anxious mind began to picture the boy—his glorious Robert—mingling with the gay society of New Gate, joining in their sports, partaking of the so-called harmless dinners, in which wine and even whisky were served in abundance.

He felt that he would rather see Robert dead than to see him under the influence of alcohol once.

So intent was he in this line of unpleasant, bitter thinking that he did not hear the door open, nor see the ruddy face of Robert framed therein, until the young man's "Hello, Pater!" aroused him.

"You look as if you are about to be burned alive, Pater mine," said Robert, noticing his father's haggard and anxious countenance. "Come, cheer up! Does my going away affect you so? I verily believe you would keep me here in this little, stuffy town always. Why, father, I'm tired meeting the same people, doing the same things over and over. There's nothing to keep me here now that I've finished school. I want to make new acquaintances: I want to see the world."

John Drew looked at this full-fledged youngling and felt it to be utterly useless to protest. This young man before him must go away and work out his own destiny as thousands of other young men had done. Controlling himself with a mighty effort, John Drew spoke as bravely as he could: "You are right, my son. Go; nothing but good can come of it, surely. You are twenty-one now and should know how to keep to the right and shun the wrong. But you will find New Gate a different place from this. Its atmosphere is not so pure, its moral standard low, most of the inhabitants are of the baser sort."

"I'm going there to work, father; not to loll and idle among low-class individuals. I dare say I'll have little time to be led from the path of rectitude; then—I'm my father's son, you know!" He spoke proudly as he measured his height with that of his father and found himself even the taller of the two.

The father turned, placed a firm hand on each of the young man's shoulders, looked deeply and earnestly into the fearless eyes. There was something he was about to say—some grave warning; but a sudden fear clutched at his heart, and the warning did not come. If he had only known—but of course he did not know, could not know what the coming years might have in store for Robert.

After that John Drew forgot his fears in the close companionship of his son. In various ways the son revealed hidden traits of character which delighted his father's heart. He was indeed a son to be proud of. His society was delightful. He was brilliant in speech, possessing a keen sense of humor and wit, which rendered conversation with him charming. He possessed an indomitable courage; and his moral principle, his father believed, would steer him clear of evil-doing.

Their few remaining days together were memorable ones. Arm in arm the father and son strolled about the gay lawns. They found a sort of boyish pleasure in going over the old haunts and even renewing their old games. Each knew what this parting would cost the other. Robert knew that he was about to cast a cloud over his father's sky, which had hitherto been flooded with sunshine. Therefore he strove to bring back the happy years which they had known together. They even spent hours throwing pebbles into the little brook back of the wood-lot. Once they found the battered wheels of an old goat wagon. "Useless, outgrown relics of the past," thought Robert, ruthlessly kicking the rusted wheels from the heaps of discarded rubbish. But to the father they were gold treasures of a very happy past,

and he secretly planned to return alone and store them away for safekeeping.

That day came all too soon for the parting. After Robert had actually gone, poor John Drew returned to his empty home—a forlorn gentleman, indeed. The old housekeeper's heart was touched when she saw him wandering about from room to room as if in search of someone.

A month later Robert, sitting at his desk in Morgan & Sons, penned a letter home, telling of his work and the pleasure he derived from it. He had written several letters home, but this one seemed to give his father more pleasure than all the others.

"I feel, dear Pater, that I am at last in the great game of life," he wrote, "and I find it exhilarating. I love the work. I have little time for anything else. I go to church on Sundays. Now and then I visit—in the very best homes, mind you. During my leisure hours—well, Pater, 'Libros, cum mihi est otium lego'; for when I do have a few leisure hours and would perhaps spend them in idleness, I find that 'Liber bonus me liberat periculo.' "

John Drew smiled at the Latin phrases. "The lad's as good as gold," he thought.

Another time he wrote: "Pater, I attended my first dinner party here. Little, stuffy Hollyville can't hold a candle to New Gate when it comes to affairs of this kind. They are simply dazzling! The very best people attend." Here followed a list of aristocratic names.

"The boy is indeed becoming a factor in the great game of life," thought John Drew as he read this letter. With a mighty effort he stifled the fear that

would, in spite of him, find a place in his heart. He reasoned within himself that this was quite natural and proper. "A man cannot contribute anything worthy to society without putting himself into it, checking his fancies, and restraining his impulses. The constant appeal to the intellect, as he comes in contact with learned people, would serve to perfect his manners and bearing toward other people. It is absurd to suppose that the young man would absent himself from society. Since he had chosen this vocation, he would prove himself a failure if he did not enter into it as a part of the world's work, and not simply a means of getting a living. A man should regard his business as a part of the world's work, his share of the great activities that render society possible. There would be greater success in all the occupations of life if men did not too often pursue them simply for a livelihood, with no thought that they may contribute directly to true manhood and womanhood. That is an utterly low business which regards it as only a means of getting a living."

In this wise John Drew reasoned, and read the account of Robert's entering into society with a rising degree of pride. Another time Robert wrote a letter in which he gave a lengthy description of one of New Gate's fashionable dinner parties. "The young women here are wonderful," he wrote in all the fire and ardor of youth.

John Drew sat far into the late hours of that night, staring into the fire and conjuring up all sorts of morbid fancies. He too had once mingled with that class of young women. The beautiful, dazzling, thoughtless creatures were but shining lights to lure,

charm, and bewilder the green youth—lure, and in the end destroy. Of course there were some among them who were ideal, good young women; but men rarely chose them—why, he did not know.

Once while he dozed he thought he saw a man walking along the street; his shoulders were stooped and sloven; his face red and swollen; his eyes restless and bloodshot. Over his head a row of burning letters spelled the words, "THE CURSE." The fellow stumbled and fell upon the pavement. John Drew thought he ran to lift the fallen creature, and behold, it was Robert!

John Drew awoke and spent nearly all the rest of the night pacing the floor in restless apprehension. But the new day dawned so lovely and bright that he scolded himself severely for his unreasonable and morbid fancies. "The boy is all right and I am the fool," he told himself.

CHAPTER II

On the evening of the great event of the season, the King's banquet, Robert Drew found himself in a flutter of excitement which was quite an unusual thing for him. He had attended many a gay festival in his own little town, all of which were simple, innocent affairs in which those pure-minded young people took great delight. There was always soft music and dancing, cards and other simple games. But Robert had never witnessed such an affair as this social event promised to be. It was to be a ball, given in honor of Miss Grace King's return from abroad.

Robert was eager to meet this Grace King, whose praise was upon every tongue. Just after business hours he wrote his father concerning the great event, announcing himself as one of the honored guests.

That night, as he entered the banquet hall in company with one of his new acquaintances, he gave a little start of amazement and pleasure; and it was plainly evident that Raymond King, noted as he was for lavish expenditure, had outdone himself this time. The whole room was a bower of roses—great, climbing bushes, heavy with blooms. Cool, green ivy hid the walls from floor to ceiling, and were supported upon cunningly wrought trellises, through which hidden lights glowed softly like fireflies. Marble statuettes gleamed in certain nooks. They were so placed as to heighten the effect of space and to carry out the idea of a garden. In the center was a wide

but shallow stone fountain, on the surface of which large-leaved pond lilies floated. Beautiful goldfish with filmy fins and tails like iridescent wedding trains propelled themselves indolently about. Two dimpled cupids held a marble cornucopia, out of which trickled a sparkling stream of water. Robert knew that the wonderful Miss King had wrought all this lovely arrangement herself.

There was a flutter of excitement and many words of inquiry as Robert and his companion entered. Many of the young ladies wanted to know who was the six-foot young demigod with the college air. Robert was indeed a very striking figure, rising head and shoulders above his companion—the very impersonation of clean, healthy, wholesome young manhood. He was not long a member of the gay throng before Miss King entered.

Her father, whom Robert had already met, led her through the throng leaning gracefully on his arm, and in a stately, old-fashioned way, introduced her to several of the young people. Robert was the last one to receive an introduction. He led the smiling young woman up to Robert, saying: "Grace, my daughter, this is Robert Drew, son of John Drew, a prominent merchant, and a friend of my boyhood."

Robert thought he had never seen so divine a creature before. To him she was a star, radiating brilliant rays of light which dazzled all who beheld her. In fact, he thought her all that a beautiful woman is said to be. She passed on to another group of young people, but not without an open admiring glance at Robert. Sometime after that she even sought him, evidently as much impressed as he.

Robert was at first somewhat shy and embarrassed, but this feeling soon wore off under the influence of her easy manner and charming grace. She was not timid or shy like the maidens of his home town: neither did he think her bold—just simply charming and very gracious. She was perfectly at her ease, and so prettily garrulous and confidential, telling little stories of her life abroad and describing scenery on some lake. After she had babbled sweetly about fashion, society, balls, receptions, operas, and theaters for several minutes, she turned upon him a marvelously penetrating glance of her dark eyes, a glance which startled him as much as an unexpected flash of light might have done. He returned her gaze wonderingly as she asked the perfectly simple little question, "And you, what do you do? How do you amuse yourself?"

"M—me?" he stammered, "I work."

"Ah, yes. You are in your father's business?"

"I clerk in Morgan & Sons."

"You must find it dull and tiresome to labor all day. You ought to rest sometimes. You must visit your friends and be gay. Don't you agree with me?"

"Assuredly," said Robert, becoming more at ease as he listened to her simple, childish chatter. "But perhaps I do not take my rest precisely like other people. I read a great deal—some day I hope to be able to write."

"What—books? How charming!"

Here their conversation was abruptly broken off, as Grace's mother, a dignified lady clad in richest silk, with huge diamonds gleaming here and there upon

her handsome person, sailed up from a remote corner of the room, where she had no doubt been watching them with the speculative observation of a match-making matron.

The room was soon dinning with strains of the invisible orchestra, and the vocal chatter and exclamations of the guests. Presently the sound melted into the soft, alluring melody of a grand old waltz, and the dancing began. The couples floated over the floors like fairy folk in wonderland, so it seemed to Robert. He could dance well, but was reluctant to try his skill here in this assembly, where dancing was indeed an art. He said as much to Miss Grace, but that gracious young lady wouldn't allow him to refuse.

"Let me teach you," she said, sweetly, giving him another of those thrilling glances. He could feel her body tremble as he took her in his arms, and as they gently glided out on the floor, there was in her steps that indescribable quality born in natural dancers. Her supple body supplied all the deficiencies of his slightly awkward steps, and soon they were the center of attraction.

When the dance was over her eyes were twin stars, her cheeks were roses. Her rounded bosom heaved with intense excitement. When she took her place at the table and from sheer satisfied exuberance laughed her dear, trilly little laugh, Robert said under his breath: "By Jove! What a ripping girl!" Miss Grace did not fail to catch the fire of admiration in his eyes, and her own heart glowed in triumph. The diners soon arranged themselves and

the dinner began. To Robert there was a complete absence of the stiffness at the formal banquets of his college home. The moments did not drag. A Bohemian spirit prevailed. The ardor of the men, encouraged by coquetry and smiles, rose quickly; wine flowed and a general intimacy began.

Without knowing why, Robert could not enter into the prevailing intimacy with Miss Grace. He thought her much more attractive than the girls of his acquaintance, and yet it was this very attractiveness and intimacy that alarmed his inbred social conservatism regarding women.

He began to become conscious of thinking rapidly and becoming excited. He wanted to appear well-bred in the eyes of this woman, yet drinking intoxicants of any sort was altogether alien to his custom. The exciting tendency increased as he set aside the glass which had been filled by the brilliant woman by his side. At this she looked up at him with large, soft, serious eyes. He hesitated no longer, but tipping his glass with hers, drank to her health. It was Madeira wine of such exquisite perfume and admirable flavor that Robert allowed his glass to be filled again and again. Being entirely unaccustomed to strong drinks of any kind, Robert soon felt a kind of dizziness about his head, and he longed to get out in the open air. Miss Grace continued her gay chatter and her dazzling smiles until Robert found himself mounted as if on golden wings. The dizziness gave place to hilarity as he partook of more wine. His boyish shyness and some of his scrupulous ideas concerning women slowly fell off like a cloak. In his

wondering excitement and new joy, he leaned across the table, boldly took Miss Grace's hand in his, and talked freely with her—even a degree of flippancy tinged his speech.

After dinner the wonderful music began playing again. Other couples were dancing, so he seized the yielding body of Miss Grace in his arms and whirled her away. He wanted to dance in this way continually. He wanted to float away out into the soft, starlit night with this rare creature clasped in his arms. No one knew—not even Miss Grace herself was aware of the rage of passion that was racing through Robert. His incoherent thoughts were that he did not want to ever stop dancing with her. He had a mad desire to kiss her—to devour her—to strangle her with love.

When it was all over, and he had pressed her two small hands at parting, Robert knew that he loved Grace King—loved her as he would love no other woman. He was no longer master of his own destiny: Miss Grace was his fate.

The next morning when he took his place at the office, somehow his work did not seem quite so delightful as formerly. Amazement was so deep upon him that he moved about mechanically. Last evening's experience was so different from anything he had ever known. He was fascinated, bewildered, and yet—yet there was something about it all that he did not altogether like.

Whenever those conflicting emotions came over him, the face of Grace King floated before his vision —alluring, glorious, and compelling.

Robert became a frequent visitor at Miss Grace's home. He attended more such brilliant parties, partook of her wine and her smiles with increasing enjoyment, while she, fair siren, was more in love with her sense of triumph over this "country boy" than anything else. She gave him just enough encouragement to keep him at her feet, but never allowing him to rise and claim her as his own. There was as yet no love in her heart: in his absence she could even find it in her heart to laugh at him, whereas in all decency and conscience it would have become her to have wept for the mischief she had wrought.

CHAPTER III

ONE cold November evening Robert went to his room somewhat earlier than usual. He had been feeling sick all day. Having never been sick in his life, it was quite a new experience for him. Every joint in his body ached; he shivered from head to foot as he went out of the warm office into the open street. A cold rain had set in, and the dampness agonized his aching joints all the more.

Since his lodging was only a short distance from the office, he never thought of hiring a carriage or going on the car, but hurried on foot through the cold, drizzling rain to his apartments. His roommate, a young man who worked at one of the downtown saloons, had already arrived, built a fire, and set things to order. Robert soon removed his soaked, uncomfortable clothing, stretched himself before the fire, and was tolerably comfortable. "Let me mix you a little drink—something hot," suggested Jack. "Go to bed, old man; make yourself comfy. I'll warm you up all right—just you wait."

Then that amiable young man adroitly prepared one of those subtle drinks which is the beginning of the downfall of so many young men. He meant it as an act of kindness, of course, but all unconscious of it, he was rounding off the corners of the foundation which had been so subtly laid by those harmless beverages at the dinner-parties. He was all but putting the finishing touches to the thing which Robert's father lived in fear of and dreaded most.

Robert drank the steaming draught without question. Soon a sense of warmth and comfort stole over him and he fell asleep. The next day he was better and went back to his work. But Robert was far from well. Before noon he felt that he must even leave the office again. Mr. Leek, another employee in Morgan & Sons, noticed Robert's gray, pinched look and advised him to retire immediately.

"You'd better call in a physician, Drew," he said. "You look all in."

"I'll be all right when I'm tucked in. Jack, my roommate, is a capital nurse. He'll bring me around with one of his curious drinks, I dare say."

Sure enough, Jack tucked him in and administered another of those deceiving hot drinks which soothe for the time being, but leave an indelible trace of its poison lurking in the blood. Robert slept all night—a feverish, troubled sleep. The next day he was able to go to his work as usual. He tried hard to regain his old, buoyant spirit for work; but about ten o'clock a violent chill seized him and he hastened once more to his room. A strange sense of impending serious illness hung over him.

"Jack," he said to his roommate that evening, "I believe I'll write the Pater to come over here. I owe him a letter or two, and I'd love to see him about now." He attempted to rise and procure writing materials, but his aching body cried aloud in protest.

"Oh, hang it! I believe I'm going to be really ill!"

"Let me call a physician," suggested Jack.

"Well. No—but I'll tell you what I will do—I'll go home to-morrow! Yes, yes, I'll give the Pater

a big surprise!" He was quite boyish in his eagerness. That night he made arrangement with his employer to be absent a few days—until he should recover—then he sat down to write a little missive to Miss Grace, his hand shaking so that he could hardly write the lines which that worshiped young woman would remember to her dying day. It read:

"My Beloved One: I am not well to-day—a foolish chill. Nothing of consequence, I hope. I leave to-morrow for home. I am delighted at the prospect of seeing the Pater. I'd so love to come to you once before I go, my beautiful queen, but I'm too ill. Farewell till I return again—all well.

"May the saints keep you ever, my dearest and best beloved. Yours heart and soul,

ROBERT."

The next morning, while he was making preparation for his departure, Jack was moved with compassion when he beheld the ashen look of the sick man. "Why, old sport, you are really ill. You'd better defer that journey." At Robert's sign of negation, he urged, "Then you'd better see a physician before you go. We'll have ample time."

"Oh, bother a physician!" Robert said impatiently. "He will only advise me to go to bed; keep quiet; take nasty medicine. I'm all right—only I do seem so chilly."

"Well, suppose we go by Croggs's and get you a bottle of spirits. It'll brace you up as nothing else will. Come—what do you say? It will warm you up in a jiffy, old man; come. Try it."

Robert consented—anything to give warmth to his icy spine. He felt so wretched and ill at that moment that he was willing to submit to anything which would enable him to make the journey. He was struck with a mad desire to go home. He longed to feel his father's hand—strong, yet tender as a mother's—soothing his fevered brow. He wanted his father more than anything else on earth—more than he wanted Miss Grace even. When they entered the saloon his body shook with a chilliness which he was unable to conceal.

The keeper, Croggs, a shrewd little fellow with a narrow, keen eye to business, began to urge him to take a drink. "See how this one glassful will warm you up," he said, pouring out a small tumblerful. Robert made a faint sign of rejection, at which the keeper urged the more strongly. "Goodness knows, you need it this raw morning. Drink!"

Robert laughed a trifle nervously, and his hand trembled as he raised the glass to his lips. Slowly tilting the glass, he tasted the liquor. Why, it was delicious to his palate, exquisitely fine and delicate! In his pleasurable amazement, he drank half the tumblerful, readily growing conscious of an indescribably delightful sense of restorative. Warmth and comfort pervaded his whole system.

"Why, the stuff is excellent!" he cried, and without taking more thought as to what he was doing, he finished the whole draught. Robert had never given alcoholics a serious thought. Since his coming to New Gate he had made no special effort to steer clear of its evil influence; besides the thought of his own danger to drunkenness never entered his mind.

His father had never warned him against it—why should he give it serious thought?

The stuff was fine, bracing! Robert purchased a whole bottleful. When he was comfortably settled on the train, he drank more with increasing avidity. Previous to taking it he had been cold and shivering, but now he was thoroughly warm, agreeably languid, and a trifle sleepy. "The stuff has no equal when it comes to its medicinal properties," he said drowsily. The rumble and roar of the shrieking locomotive seemed afar off like sounds in a dream. He was in that hazy condition of mind common to certain phases of intoxication when the drunkard is apt to believe he is thinking, though really no comprehensible thought is possible to his stupefied brain.

It was pitch dark when he reached Hollyville. He got up slowly, walked—or reeled—out of the car. When he reached the street, he found himself exposed to a furious rain which poured down incessantly.

Robert had advanced down an obscure street only a little way—stumbling weakly—when he fell. Strange, incoherent sentences coursed off his lips with impetuous rapidity. His voice had a strange, piteous pathos in it. Robert was drunk!

The cold rain continued for some time. Finally the wind shifted and became a colder north wind, freezing the rain into sleet. It fell upon the pitiful figure of the young man lying there huddled in an insensible heap. He lay stunned for a few minutes, until brought back to consciousness by the cold sleet pelting his face. With a desperate effort he started upright and gazed wildly around. He could

not make out his surroundings; neither did he realize the fact that he lay in a slough—a concoction of mud and liquid filth.

The darkness was intense. He looked upward and discerned no sky, not even an unfathomable void, but only a black and impenetrable nothingness, as though heaven and all its lights had been blotted from the system of the universe.

Mumbling and whining, he dropped his head upon his arm, half buried in the cold mud. A stony weight lay behind his temples, cold and hard and heavy. He tried to think and found it impossible. With an incoherent outburst, which he himself scarcely heard, he sank into unconsciousness again.

He had lain thus about half an hour when the solitary figure of a bent old man passed along the street, carrying a tin lantern which cast a circular pattern of its punched holes on the ground about him as he went along. Luckily for Robert that this old man happened to come along that street at that particular moment, for the cold wind and muddy filth had chilled all his body save one lukewarm spot, which death's frozen fingers were searching for even then. Happily, too, that the yellow disk of light reached wide enough round so as to show the awful sight to the dim, old eyes of the man. He saw, and let out a yell which brought two other men to the spot. Together they picked up the body, searched for signs of life, and finding none, were about to drop the body and flee when a policeman appeared. After the old man had told all that he knew concerning the tragedy, the policeman held the light so that its rays fell full on the young man's face. With a

mutual cry they all started forward, searching the face of the man on the ground.

"Robert Drew, as I'm alive!"

"But it can't be," said the old man who found him. They looked again. Robert Drew it proved to be—but in what a plight! They thought it a case of robbery, never connecting the young man with drunkenness.

The policeman then searched the body for signs of violence. In the search he found the whisky bottle, emptied of two thirds its contents. Then he knew. To make sure, he bent over the young man—down close to his frozen lips. The unmistakable odor clung to them.

Silently the men lifted the half frozen body and bore it away. The policeman swore an oath and spat on the sidewalk.

Down College Street they turned—on toward the Drews' residence. Once one of the men sneered: "It's whisky and women that has brought young Drew to this. I knew it would come soon or late—a chip off the old block."

"Shut up!" thundered the old man who carried the lantern. "If you say aught against John Drew's son, I'll wallup the life out o' yer! There's something else back of this. I know the boy and his father, too."

. . . . . .

The little sitting-room in the Drews' home was comfortable on this wild, wintry night. The faithful old housekeeper had been asleep fully two hours. Nobody knew just when John Drew was accustomed

to retire—indeed, the housekeeper had her suspicions as to whether he retired at all some nights. It seemed to be his delight to sit musing by the fire far into the night. At times he seemed particularly lonely. She knew in what direction his longing lay. She missed the lad herself. The first days after his absence she couldn't help but wander about the rooms, and her motherly old heart always warmed at the sight of any article that belonged to him.

"Such a dear, big-hearted lad he is, and I miss his jolly ways," she said. "Pity his mother was not here to see how capable he looked as he marched away from the old homestead that mornin', out into the world to scratch for himself."

To-night old Janet had retired early and was fast asleep when John Drew came home. Replenishing the fire, he settled himself for his accustomed reverie. A sense of peace stole over him as he warmed himself and listened to the chilly winds outside. The firelight shed an appropriate glory around the room. It seemed to caress his hair, now showing the first signs of old age. By now he had grown somewhat accustomed to the longing in his heart, and had settled himself for the task of making a last desperate effort in the strenuous but not unpleasant task of making money and saving it against his son's wedding day. He planned to make that dowry as gracious as possible. His days were full of hard work, but he cared not, so long as he was successful. Each day's end was always crowned by the sweetest of all—the hours of cheerful musing and pleasant memories that he spent by his fireside. Always his fancies could create some bright dream of happiness for his son

and his wife and little children. For himself he wanted little—just peace and quiet for his old age.

So in these chaste and warm affections, humble wishes, and honest toil for some useful end, he found health for his mind and quiet for his heart, the prospect of happy old age, and, fairest hope of all—the hope of heaven.

As the clock struck twelve he entered into a sort of doze. Slowly the figures in the room grew indistinct, fading into pictures in the air, and then to fainter outlines, while the firelight glimmered on the walls of the room, bringing to relief strange shadows which took the shape of evil, mocking demons.

O the slight tissue of his dreams could no more preserve him from the stern approach of misfortune than a robe of cobweb could repel the wintry blast outside!

Suddenly he felt a chilliness—not of the body, but a strange shivering, a foolish dread of looking behind him. It was no wonder; for at that moment he heard the tread of many feet mounting his front steps. When the doorbell rang it sent a chill of apprehensive horror to his soul. With a mighty force he took hold of himself.

"Fool that I am! to shrink like a haunted criminal because someone rings my doorbell at midnight! Perhaps it's Robert—come on the eleven-thirty!" The thought lent wings to his feet. In a moment he had opened the door. A broad smile of welcome was on his face. But it was upon the visage of old Josiah Brown that his benevolent smile was cast. John Drew, quickly recovering his shock of disappointment, opened the door wider in order that his late visitor

might enter out of the cold and bitter night. As he did so he caught sight of the silent procession which stood under the shelter of his veranda. A stream of light fell upon a limp object which they held among them. It took the shape of a man—dead perhaps; or severely wounded. "It is someone in trouble seeking shelter at the nearest residence," thought John Drew.

"We'd better hurry, or the young man might peg out. He's half frozen," sounded a gruff voice. Old Josiah Brown stammered out something about Mr. Robert and an accident, while the men proceeded to pass into the hall. Still the poor father did not know, and stood looking at them like one in a dream might gaze upon a passing spectral vision.

That man which they carried was like Robert! Yet it could not be—unless he had met with some accident on the way home. Half crazed with apprehension, he snatched the hat away which covered the face. Robert! What did it mean?

Old Josiah, seeing John Drew's miserable state, caught him by the arm, saying: "Don't you understand? There's been an accident of some kind—robbery perhaps. Mr. Robert was found on Subway Street, in a gutter—unconscious. He had been lying there for some time, sir, for he was well-nigh froze to death when I found 'im, sir. Better call in a medicine man 't once't, sir."

John Drew darted over to the body, which lay smoking by the hearth as the warmth began to melt the sleet on the frozen clothing.

Down on his knees went John Drew, and began to remove the wet, muddy garments, then to rub

the frozen limbs of his son. Vigorously and in a sort of frenzy he applied himself to his task.

Once as he bent his ear to the young man's breast he thought he caught the faint odor of—no, no, it couldn't be that—and he worked the harder.

Old Janet, now thoroughly aroused by the noise and strange occurrences, fetched warm blankets, clean linen, and soon Robert was wrapped from head to foot.

When Robert did open his eyes he looked up at the face above him—looked long, as if his dazed brain could not grasp the situation. Then a glorious light leaped into his eyes. He smiled and whispered, "Pater!" Then again, "I'm sick—sick, Pater." The warm fire seemed to make him worse. His stomach seemed as if it would turn wrong-side out. He began to heave. Just then the doctor entered. He went over to where the young man lay, a look of incredulity on his face when he saw who the patient was. His skilled nostrils detected the strong odor which filled the room.

"Whisky!" he exclaimed under his breath. The policeman smiled.

"Robert," said the father, coming forward, "tell Doctor Morris what has happened."

While he bent over Robert, he smelled the odor of whisky, too, but attributed its presence to any of the others, never thinking of Robert as its possible origin. The young man attempted to speak, but a paroxysm of coughing seized him and he grasped his side in an agony of pain.

"Don't try it now," said the kind doctor. "There is a mystery here," he said, turning to the policeman.

"Not much as I can see," said that person addressed. "I was present when the young man was found. He's simply drunk! Look in his coat pocket and see the empty bottle."

"Robert drunk! You lie!" It came from John Drew, who had been listening in amazement to the dialogue which was being carried on by these two. "Never!" he cried vehemently, as with one powerful stroke he cleared the space around his son, and bent to search the muddy garments himself. In one of the pockets his trembling hand came in contact with something hard—a bottle! He drew it out, trembling all over as he held it to the light. It was two thirds empty!

"O God!" The cry was like the last exclamation wrung from a creature on the inquisition rack of torture. It was terrible! The men who heard it were chilled by that awful, despairing cry.

Gasping for articulate speech, a wild imprecation left John Drew's lips without his realizing his own utterance. He was giddy and faint; his temples throbbed heavily; the blood rushed to his brain—the table, the chairs, the bed on which his son lay rushed round and round in dark, whirling rings. All at once his throat filled with a cold suffocation; tears flooded his eyes, and he broke into a loud sob of fiercest agony as he fell upon his knees beside the bed.

Robert gazed from one to the other in mute wonder—not able to comprehend anything at all. Surely he was not going to die—yet he felt very ill—worse than he had ever felt before. That must be the case; the doctor must have told the pater that he was going to die, or he wouldn't act like that.

The pain in his side was terrible. How he wanted to rise and comfort his father! but he could not talk for coughing.

"F-father," at last he managed to whisper, "don't grieve so."

"How can you ask me not to grieve after seeing you lying before me as you are—drunk! Ah! I'd rather they tell me that you are dying!"

"Am I not going to die, father? What have they told you?"

"Son!" exclaimed the father, a faint hope entering his breast, "tell them they lie! Tell them you have not been drinking this!" He held up the bottle in pitiful, shaking hands.

Robert looked at it, then said: "Why, yes, Pater, I drank all but what you see in the bottle. I—I was so chilly and wretched—and—and the stuff is fine for medical uses." Robert spoke with great effort.

"But, my son, you knew the effects of alcohol—what a base deceiver it is! You read that in your books."

"But, father, I—I'm no habitual—drunk-ard! This is the first—I've ever tak-en. I find it great for that purpose."

The father groaned aloud. "My God! I should have warned my boy—my innocent, unsuspecting boy!"

"I—I'm so—sorry I drank it—father, since it grieves you s-so. I am sure I shall never touch it again—no, never—if it pains you—so." He writhed in the terrible pain which grasped him. A fit of violent coughing seized him again. The doctor advised absolute quiet: the policeman withdrew.

For three days Robert was very near death's door, but on the fourth day was better—a fact which delighted his father's soul. He rarely ever left the bedside, and the strong affection between these two was beautiful to see. The faithful old housekeeper also hovered over her "blessed young man" like a mother hen hovers over her brood. In about a week Robert began to convalesce.

One night about eleven o'clock Robert suddenly awoke out of a troubled sleep, in which he dreamed that he was seized with a great thirst and had drunk gallon after gallon of water without allaying that thirst. The fire burned low in the grate; the wind outside whistled frigidly. Robert, shivering, drew his warm blankets about him. Suddenly he realized that he was in truth very thirsty. Not wishing to disturb anyone, he slipped quietly out of bed, went over to the little table across the room in hopes of finding a drink. Janet always kept a pitcherful of fresh water on the table; but to-night it was empty. He was about to scamper back to his bed when he spied the whisky bottle standing among the vials of medicine. What cruel fate had made Janet place it there when she should have hurled it out of the window?

The invalid stood looking at this bottle in wonder; for it was liquor he craved—not water. An almost uncontrollable longing for it filled his throat. He wanted to feel its delicious fire on his palate.

"I'll just taste it," he said, uncorking the bottle. It had a delicious odor, which the young man liked immensely. He glanced guiltily toward the door, then took one draught, smacked his lips, then took another. This time he emptied the bottle.

Like a guilty rogue he slunk back to bed. Again that mysterious, delightful sensation fused his brain. He felt jolly; and he wanted to laugh, laugh, laugh—and talk! The world seemed full of dreamy fancies. His thoughts turned to Miss Grace. A mighty passion sent feverish blood coursing through his veins. He thought of her in dumb, rapt ecstasy while she, fair siren in white robes with bosom full and bare—she with her wicked, laughing eyes and jewel-wreathed tresses and sensuous shape, was beautiful wanton enough for Robert's eyes. She seemed to float about him in lambent wreaths of exquisitely brilliant colors.

O! A most wretched evil is alcohol, for its greatest mission is that of transforming pure, chaste ideals, true felicities, into voluptuous thinking and sensuous longing. It distorts and renders hideous that which is the best, the holiest—the sublime crucible in which is consummated the fusion of man and woman—love. It makes men drink and dream, dance and caper in a fool's paradise. It encourages writers and dramatists to pen obscenities, the painter to paint repulsive nudities. It causes the public man to talk loud inanities. It makes women practice wanton wiles.

All of a sudden Robert's foolish brain formed the cunning idea of hiding the empty bottle. He must not leave it where the Pater or Janet would find it empty. This would never do, for that would destroy all hopes of securing more of the stimulant. "I must hide it—hide it," he kept repeating, foolishly. He staggered to the table, seized the bottle and raised it to his lips in order to get the few remaining drops of the precious liquid. Then he crept back to

his bed. That subtle flavor clung to his palate—that insidious fluid had already crept drop by drop through his veins.

There had been a slow but sure transfusion of the strange and deadly fire into his blood, which once absorbed, must cling to him forever. The draught to-night had given the devil time to finish his work, which had its beginning in the first glass of wine taken at that high-class social entertainment, the Kings' banquet. It had given the devil time to finish his work of consuming virtue, conjuring up vice, and turning an honest man into a liar, a feeling heart to stone, and making of a man a fiend!

Robert's desire to talk aloud was replaced by the cunning idea of secrecy. He tucked his head under the covers and delighted in his wild, delirious thoughts of Miss Grace. This fantastic dreaming continued for some time; but finally he dropped into a troubled sleep, and the next morning awoke quite depressed and languid. He attributed this feeling to his need of more alcoholic stimulant, and later in the day began to formulate plans which would enable him to procure more without anyone's knowledge. Before night he had that plan all cunningly laid, and proceeded to send an order to Croggs. The faithful old Janet had never questioned anything Robert did, so he knew that he could give her the letter to post, with the assurance that the dear old soul would not stop until she had carried out his orders.

Early that night he said to his father: "Go, Pater—get some rest. I'm all right now, and shall be strong and well in a day or so." His father tucked him in with unusually tender hands, and before he

left, dropped on his knees beside the bed, evoking the mercies of heaven for grace which alone could sustain in keeping his son from the evil influence of whisky. Robert was deeply touched. The sight of his father's bowed head in prayer for his safety caused Robert's heart to melt down in remorse, and a great tenderness and love filled his soul for his only parent, who had been both mother and father to him. This sweet influence dwelt with him and kept him from making his order that night.

The next morning he awoke with the same feeling of excessive thirst. It was the fatal thirst for whisky! He took the empty bottle from its hiding place, and the delicate whiff of odor intensified his longing, hardening the tender fibers of his heart once more. Robert made up his mind to make just one order, believing that as soon as he should become strong and well he could abjure the passion without difficulty. He reasoned that on account of his excessive weakness and nervousness, he needed support in the form of a stimulant.

Robert was ignorant of the fact that the moral power of resistance decreases with each repetition of the dose. He conjured himself into believing that his father's idea concerning alcohol was largely prejudice. He, Robert, could prove that he could take it as a medicine and when he no longer needed it, he could easily let it alone.

It was a fine morning. The air outside was cold and bracing. The naked trees stood grim and tall and unbending in the sunlight. A few stray birds twittered near Robert's window. These same birds had visited his window many a time, and always

had their boldness rewarded by generous supplies of crumbs and clean, sweet chops. But this morning they twittered in vain. A shaft of sunlight streamed clear across Robert's room. It revealed and illumined millions of tiny particles of matter. How often had Robert as a child lain awake for hours watching this same shaft of light, so wonderfully peopled with mysterious little bodies, which frolicked—pitching headlong, turning over and over in the sunlight, then suddenly disappearing. It always made him think of the countless millions of souls invisible to the human eye, and which the light of immortality alone could reveal. He used to lie there as long as possible —thinking of his mother, wondering how he was going to know her among the other souls.

This morning while he lay there watching the light, his thoughts turned into the same channel as of old, and he wondered if his mother knew what he was about to do.

His father's room was just across the hall from his. When the house was built, Robert was only six years old, and they had arranged the rooms that way so that he and his father could lie in bed and see each other the very first thing in the morning, and talk across the hall to each other. This had been a sweet custom of theirs when Robert was a little lad. This same custom had grown into his young manhood.

While he lay looking at the sunlight and thinking about his mother, the door, left slightly ajar, opened wider so that Robert was able to see his father sitting at his desk, busily engaged in writing. The desk was strewn with papers; he looked fatigued and careworn.

For one brief second Robert's conscience smote him. His father's fine, placid, yet weary face roused in him a struggling passion of regret and remorse. It was a mere flash of pain, for the very devil of craving filled his throat. That consuming thirst for the stimulant seized him—shutting out all tender sentiments.

"Pshaw!" he said, "there is no need for this weak sentiment—it is not at all a matter for compunction." As soon as he heard the last echo of his father's departing footsteps he got out of bed, seated himself at his desk and wrote Croggs an order for whisky. The letter indicated a strong wish for absolute secrecy. The devil within him bore witness that Croggs would not fail him in the matter of concealment.

Sure enough, a few days after that, he was the recipient of a package which, to all appearances, was a package of books. No one thought of it being aught else save books.

On the day of the arrival Robert was in a state of feverish excitement. He tried hard to appear calm, but inwardly raged to open his package. He stifled the peevishness and impatience which arose in response to Janet's tender, motherly concern. He hungered to be alone with his secret. For the first time in his life he wanted his father's absence.

At first opportunity he broke the seal in his room behind a locked door. At sight of the sparkling fluid a million demons broke loose. He wanted to drink all of it at once, but cunning saved him from this error. "A little at a time," he said, and held the bottle to his lips. He got only one great gulp, when he heard Janet's footsteps in the hall. He heard her

stop at his door, turn the knob, and heard her grunt of disappointment at finding the door locked.

"In a minute, Janet," she heard her "blessed young man" say, and waited patiently. Robert darted about with devilish haste, tucking the parcel from sight. "Damn it!" he muttered thickly as he scrambled to bed without unlocking the door.

"I'll come again, Bobbie," he heard Janet say, and inwardly swore because she had called him by the old pet name. "Confound! Why can't they let a fellow grow up sometime!" "No—come on in now, Janet," he said, calmly.

"How can I come in when the door is locked?" And old Janet laughed.

Robert unlocked the door and Janet came in, bringing a tray of tempting food. But Robert did not want the food—the steaming broth and crisp brown toast had no attraction for him. The crave for drink consumed every other want. More than the hunger after bread—more than the frenzy of love, this poison hunger overpowers every other instinct.

He waved the food aside with a show of irritability that he could not conceal. This was a thing quite new to the eyes of old Janet. She wondered what had come over her "blessed young man." Something had embittered and crossed his once sweet nature, she knew. She soon left the room, but to Robert's complete dismay, returned after having been gone only about five minutes. This time she brought a cup of hot cocoa.

"Here, drink this, Bobsy, dear," she crooned; "drink this, my honey. It will make Janet's young man strong—drink it for Janet, my honey-child,"

she begged in soft, sweet tones, which in the old days would have settled the thing at once. He would have gulped anything just to please her.

Now he hated her foolish, baby talk, and wanted her out of his sight. But Janet lingered—going here and there, fixing things a bit before Daddy Drew should come home. Robert, in his eagerness for her to begone, hated her.

Terrors! She was nearing its hiding place. Hell! had discovered it! Robert felt it to be so, although he did not turn his head. Janet's long pause and hoarse grunt were significant enough.

Poor Janet picked up the bottle and looked at it. She did not utter a word—just gave an involuntary grunt of fear and horror. "Heavens have mercy upon us!" she inwardly groaned, and she quickly thrust the bottle back into its hiding place. Her limbs seemed to age ten years. She tottered feebly toward the door without a word.

They both heard the front door softly close—heard the quick steps of John Drew hurrying to the bedside of his beloved son.

"God!" said Robert in wild desperation, "Janet must not tell father. I'll kill her first!"

"Janet!"

The woman turned. Robert sat up in bed. There was a sinister look in his eyes of fire which caused poor old Janet's heart to wither in her bosom. She read his meaning, even though he had only called her name.

John Drew hastened onward. Quick as the old woman's limbs would allow, she pushed the package further away from sight, then took up the tray and,

sitting on the edge of the bed, she commenced to say, without a single catch in her voice: "There now, Janet's 'blessed young man,' drink this. It will be havin' you runnin' everywhere in no time."

A second later the father entered, and smiled to see her thus mothering his son.

"I am much better—thanks to Janet's dinner," he beamed into his father's inquiring eyes. At the first opportunity Janet left the room. She had barely reached the door when her feeble old limbs gave way. She managed to totter to her room, where she dropped into a chair and for a long time her body shook with silent weeping.

Janet had been connected with the family so long. She knew the history of all the Drews—knew the poor young mother's struggle to keep John Drew from filling a drunkard's grave—knew that this struggle and the birth of Robert had brought about the hapless young woman's early death. Old Janet had watched the perfect love which existed between father and son, and hoped that the father's heroic struggle against strong drink might be bountifully rewarded in the perfect manhood of the son.

Old Janet had faithfully adhered to her duty in helping John Drew to give Robert a careful training. Both of them used the utmost caution in regard to their mutual fear.

The cruel truth had been thrust upon her, that the curse which they feared most had descended upon Robert in spite of all their caution. "Oh, my poor baby! My poor, dear little Bobs! My poor, God-forsaken 'blessed young man'!" she wailed, rocking herself to and fro in her misery.

All that evening Robert's father lingered near, reading to him and telling him stories—like he used to amuse little Robert of old. All during this time the appetite for the poison stimulant burned in Robert's throat.

"To-night—to-night I shall have it at all cost," he said to himself. It was twelve o'clock that night before the opportunity came. John Drew and Janet had retired. As soon as Robert felt sure of safety, he slunk out of bed and slipped his precious package from its place.

"At last!" he said, "at last!" He gloated triumphantly as he eyed the bottle—eyed it with a half scared exhilaration a man feels who takes a chance and is quite sure he'll not have another chance if he loses that one. He became desperate—nothing must hinder him now. He felt that he could shoot the first person that interrupted him.

Anyone looking in upon Robert at that moment would have been greatly shocked to see him thus transformed. His once firm lips drooped; his jaws sagged; his once splendid body was gaunt and haggard. There was a wicked glint in his eyes, and his long, bony fingers trembled as he raised the bottle to his lips in one long draught.

"Ah!" he said, smacking his lips. "Ah!—let anyone disturb me now."

He threw back his head and another stream of fire poured down his throat. This time the bottle was half empty. Being weakened because of undue excitement, Robert sank panting to a chair, looking wildly around the room as if he feared some hidden menace in the shadows. Then he threw back his

head and laughed softly. He continued to drink and to gloat until intoxication began to mount to his brain. Again the deadly poison crept through his veins, and he began to lapse into the delirium of intoxication. He raised the bottle to his lips again—it was empty!

Muttering foolishly, he rose to get back to bed without thinking to hide the traces of his guilt this time. The empty bottle fell to the floor with a slightly ringing thud. Robert took no heed as he reeled toward the bed. He was still muttering foolishly when he reached it. Instead of smuggling beneath the warm covers, he fell asleep upon top of them all, in a deep drunken stupor.

Outside the night was chill and raw, and rendered boisterous by a gale of wind which whistled along the streets. It had ceased to rain, and the high wind had shifted to the north and was bitterly cold. The fire having now burned low in the grate, gradually brightened and threw flickering shadows upon the walls and ceiling of the still chamber. Strange shadows seemed to dance in weird, wild mockery around the prostrate figure lying there on the bed and outside the covers.

Once the young man was aroused by the chilliness which crept all about his body. He stared above him; for in his fancy—was it fancy?—a shadowy figure had glided out from the semi-darkness and stood by his bedside. It laid a finger upon his scintillating heart, while the index finger of the other hand, gleaming in the darkness, pointed upwards to a mysterious fate. Robert's lips moved to form the word, "Mother!"

Thus he lay for hours until a terrible cough seemed to rend his chest. Something broke loose and blood issued from his mouth and nose. Suddenly John Drew awoke with a start. He had been having an awful dream. His first thought was of Robert. He sprang out of bed and rushed to the room across the hall—to find a sight which froze his blood in his veins. He picked up the empty bottle and stared from it to the wreck upon the bed, with a strained and startled gaze of a brave man wounded to the death. His body aged and trembled. He bore the aspect of an aged man stricken with palsy. His heart, all his hopes—his very life—rent asunder! Down, down, nearer and nearer to the floor he sank—dumb misery and unutterable woe in his dim eyes. The blow was too much for him. It struck him to the very ground.

"Robert!" he cried as he went down, "you kill me!"

What a spectacle our hollow, deceitful, brutal world must present to a higher and nobler order of beings, if cognizant of the struggle, the strife, and baseness and misery of this mundane sphere! What a wretched fool is man to allow such a miserable indulgence as drink to ruin homes by bringing youth down to degradation, and hoary hairs to a grave of dishonor and shame!

For three days Robert lingered in the throes of untold suffering. He had contracted pneumonia. The careful nursing of poor old Janet and the heart-broken father availed little. During those last days the humble pleading in the sufferer's eyes as he looked at his father was enough to melt a heart of stone. Robert knew that his father had discovered his

secret, and his eyes followed him everywhere, pleading—beseeching forgiveness.

Crazed with grief, John Drew watched by the bedside through all the hours of crucial suffering. He had not many days to watch before death entered the still chamber—and Robert Drew was no more.

Friends came and went all the next day while the body of Robert Drew lay in state. Every heart was touched, and many were the tears shed in sympathy with the bereaved parent and old Janet. All over the house there brooded the majestic stillness of sorrowing humanity, bound in breathless silence by a common spell.

Sick to the very dregs of misery, John Drew raved for days in feverish agony—agony that was blind, desperate, hopeless, helpless, and cureless! O! that horrible time! O! those dreary, wild, dark days and nights of utter loss and blank wretchedness! —that frightful space of torment in which every nerve in his body seemed torn and wrenched by that terrible grief! How he lived through it one cannot tell. His friends did not wonder that he came through it with somewhat unbalanced mind. When the frenzy of it wore itself out at last, he grew calm with that dreadful calmness of stupefaction and exhaustion. During this time he never saw anyone—never went out of the house, but kept himself shut in—alone with all his bitter sorrow.

CHAPTER IV

ONE night John Drew paced the floor of his lonely room—quick, restless pacing, which betokens an almost frenzied condition of mind on the verge of committing some desperate deed. For the last day or so he had acted that way, as if he was trying to make up his mind to a contemplated suicide. He paused in his rapid walking to open the drawer of his desk. He drew out a revolver, eyed it furtively, slipped it back into its place, and resumed his pacing again. A large, splendid photograph of Robert hung on the wall. This photograph had been made only a few months before his graduation. His father had often looked upon it with special pride. John went over to it and gazed silently upon the handsome, perfect contour of the face. When he turned abruptly away there was something in his eyes which would have alarmed an observer. His jaws were set in grim, dogged determination. At last his mind was made up to whatever he had contemplated doing. He removed the revolver from the drawer, chuckling softly as its evil gleam matched the light which burned in his eyes.

Whatever he had made up his mind to do, he must do it at once! John Drew had been wandering for many days, aimlessly, hopelessly, without consecutive idea, coherent thought, or plan of action; without the faintest inspiration or suggestion of a manner of escape from the bewildering torment of his grief, without even the power to conceive or the

will to execute a plan out of the dumb misery which gripped his heart. While he gazed upon the photograph of his unfortunate offspring, his mind had suddenly seized the terrible idea which in his unbalanced, frenzied condition of mind seemed the only retribution that would soothe his hurt and much wronged heart—murder!

He would seek the fellow who sold his son the poison, and make him pay for the dastardly deed with his blood. He would never rest until he had placed that man beyond the power to ruin other innocents. The world would be better off without him.

At that moment Croggs, in his rum shop at New Gate, had no dreams that the name and address on the label of that fatal bottle of whisky would be the means of pointing him out as a criminal, instead of fulfilling the innocent function of increasing his trade.

Having only a few moments in which to catch the early train going out to New Gate, John Drew thrust a few things into a bag, slipped the gun into his pocket, and dashed out of the house in almost an instant.

It had begun to snow, so lightly at first that it seemed a mere brush of some viewless insect upon the cheek; but by the time he reached the station, he went in out of a swarm of whirling flakes, blinded and whitened. By the time the snow had covered the streets, the train had started on its way to New Gate, carrying John Drew as one of its passengers.

The snow fell all that night, with fierce gusts of wind that moaned in the chimney of that house of

sorrow which John Drew had just vacated. It moaned and sorely troubled the sleep of poor, faithful old Janet. While the wind howled, the snow softly precipitated a spotless mantle of merciful obliteration over John Drew's departing footprints.

Day was just beginning to break when he reached New Gate. On account of the early hour and the inclemency of the weather, there were few people astir. As John Drew walked down the familiar streets of New Gate, a fierce onset of wind caught him savagely and stirred his blood into action. He turned towards Croggs's saloon, walking rapidly and undeviatingly on to escape observation. Almost before he was aware of it he was entering Croggs's. There was no other customer—a fact which pleased John Drew, for he wanted the man all to himself.

With a good-natured smile he walked up to the counter, demanded a drink, and laid down a bill. Croggs's eyes twinkled as he noted the careless indifference with which this customer handled his money. It savored of abundance. He handed the decanter to John, which he took with as much ease and confidence as he could assume. The hesitancy and tremble of his hand was unnoticed by Croggs, who continued to beam across the counter at the "early bird with the dough."

John Drew eyed the sparkling fluid amidst a tumult of rage. Suddenly some strange, intuitive knowledge seemed to warn Croggs—a creeping sensation at the nape of his neck, a strange quivering of his muscles—something. He shot a keen glance at John, thence toward a drawer in which a revolver was concealed. All at once John Drew took on an

aspect of wily cunning. He leaned one elbow on the counter in an easy, confidential manner and asked, "Business on a boom, eh?"

"Well, purty good, purty good," said Croggs.

"When the weather is like this you have an increase of trade—huh?"

"Yes, yes. You see, they must have spirits to keep their blood hot. Nothing like it to keep out cold—prevent grippe."

"Young men drop in continually and get a glass to drive out the shivers." John Drew fixed the barkeeper with a searching glance.

"Sure they do—nothing like the stuff for that," said Croggs.

"Sometimes they are innocent young men who have never had a drink—innocents who have been carefully reared in ignorance of whisky and its evil effects; and the first glass, at your suggestion, is the beginning of their ruin. You urge them when they are reluctant—timid and green."

"Sure! They, every mother's son of them, always act upon my suggestion, and are none the worse for it," answered Croggs boastfully.

John Drew's eyes narrowed perceptibly.

"Why should they come here, then, if not to buy or beg a drink?" said Croggs, noticing the rising heat in his customer's eyes.

"They might chance to come in—just drop in with a friend, perhaps."

"They ought to know what they want or don't want—it is none of my business. I sell it to whoever I can. I'm not here to reform men, but to sell whisky to any fool who wants it."

Croggs was entirely ignorant that he was sealing his doom with his bully words.

"I guess you find it a pleasant job indeed—this taking advantage of fools!" Such a sudden fury lit up John Drew's eyes that Croggs involuntarily recoiled.

"A few weeks ago a youth as ignorant of alcohol as a girl stopped in here with a chum of his. He was ill, and on his way home to his father—that father who would have given his life to prevent the steps which the young man took. You took advantage of his ignorance, urged him to drink, then sold him more. That fatal first drink was the beginning of his ruin. You finished the work by filling an order for another quart. Your damned work was as sure as hell! My boy now fills a drunkard's grave, and you —beast that you are—you are responsible for his death!"

John Drew towered above the barkeeper, who cringed in astonished fear. In his eyes there lay a look of cowardice and guilt. He remembered the incident well, and had even planned further temptation for the unsuspecting youth.

Croggs was afraid. Terror clutched at his quaking heart, for there was no mistaking the stranger's murderous intention. He tried to assume an air of indifference. He turned as if to attend to other matters of more importance; but that feeling of deadly fear crept at the nape of his neck. His moments were numbered! This was no situation to trifle and parley with. He turned and found himself staring into the deadly barrel of John Drew's revolver. Already the finger was quivering to pull the

trigger which would send Croggs to instant doom. God! Would nothing interfere—would no one come in! A cry would be useless. The arm which held the weapon was as steady as an arm of steel.

"Nothing but your life! Your life must pay for my son's ruin and death!"

"Merciful heavens! The man must be mad!" thought Croggs. Would not the merciful hand of God stay the deed which would rip his soul from his body and hurl it quaking and all unprepared before its Maker?

John Drew's teeth bared in a snarl of rage. He was madly enjoying this cowardly dog's torture. But suddenly, in the midst of his triumph, an image formed itself in his brain—the pure, spotless image of his wife. Just when he was about to pull the trigger, lo! it seemed that he was about to empty the contents of the revolver into the naked breast of his own wife —Robert's mother!

He lowered the weapon, and Croggs saw the look of murder miraculously turned to wonder and amazement. Poor Croggs breathed at last, and wiped his forehead, on which there clung great drops of cold perspiration. He knew that he had looked death square in the face. He did not know what invisible force had intervened. It was enough that the moment had passed and he was still alive. He began to beg for mercy. "Lord, man! Don't you see that this is my living? I've got to sell whisky—there's no other way. How could I know that it was going to cause the young man's death? Everybody in this town buys whisky here at my little shop. I'm not to blame for your son's death."

"If you are not, pray who, then?" The vision of Alice had vanished just in time for John to catch Croggs's last words. "Who then?" he repeated.

"Why, the one who gave me license to sell whisky —I suppose. There are other saloons—the town's full of them. Kill me, and the work goes on, while you gain nothing but bloody hands and the gallows. If you would find the real perpetrator of this crime, seek the one who issues license to sell liquors."

John Drew could not deny the truth of Croggs's statement.

There was a sound of shuffling feet outside; then three men entered the barroom. Greatly relieved, Croggs proceeded to wait upon them. Though somewhat reassured, he was yet afraid of the sinister look on John Drew's face as he watched and waited.

Croggs turned—only for an instant it seemed—but when he again sought the face of his tormentor, he was gone!

John Drew hastened from the saloon and turned down an obscure alley, out of sight. When the excited Croggs and the three rushed to the door, he was nowhere to be seen. As soon as he felt sure that he had made good his escape, he stopped in order to collect his shattered senses. He was nearly insane. The thoughts which coursed through his brain were vague and incredulous thoughts which utterly darkened all his capacity for reasoning out the tragedy of the situation. In the midst of it all he kept thinking of his boy—his glorious, manly Robert—ruthlessly destroyed by man's folly and weakness.

"Surely there shall be an atonement!" he cried. "If not, then there is something wrong in the system of creation—a flaw in the universe, and God himself cannot be perfect!" He gazed about him at the dazzling mantle of snow which covered the heaps of filth and rags, shook his head dazedly, perplexed and baffled at the inexplicable cause of things. His temples throbbed. He felt a strange dizziness about his head. Then he remembered that he had not slept in twenty-four hours, nor eaten anything. He shook himself to be assured that he dreamed not. He looked at his hands as if to find an indelible blood-stain upon them. Had he accomplished what he had come here to do? Somehow the accomplishment of the deed seemed half way between reality and fancy. He drew the revolver from his pocket and found that no bullet had been fired. He heaved a sigh, whether of relief or regret, he knew not.

Suddenly a longing for rest took possession of him. He needed warmth: he was so cold. He must move on or freeze.

John Drew stumbled on through the snow to the end of the alley. He had no strength to go farther, but threw himself dejectedly down upon the cleanly swept steps of the little cottage which stood there alone. He took no cognizance as to whether it was occupied or empty. He had been there only a little while when the door opened; and great was his surprise to find the visage of old Tom Greely framed therein. He had known old Greely from childhood. Many a time had he sought refuge from showers of hostile missiles by running into the house of old Tom Greely.

How strange that fate should send him there now—a place of refuge from his tortured mind! The sight of this old friend served to restore his equilibrium more than anything else.

John Drew was placed comfortably by a warm fire and bidden to rest while a simple meal was served. He made a great effort to become his natural self, and was successful to a great extent. After a good night's rest he was able to think more clearly. Already the actions of the previous day seemed a hideous dream. He looked at his hands, and there arose a feeling of thanksgiving that they were as yet unstained by human blood. Yesterday his plot of crime was the uppermost thing in his mind. The greatest wish of his heart was to strike the deathblow of revenge, but to-day he rejoiced to find his hands still clean of crime.

Men often overestimate their capacity for evil. They may often take steps which lead to the crime, impelled by the same sort of mental action as in working out a mathematical problem, yet be powerless with compunction at the final moment.

The joy which came over John Drew when he discovered his failure in committing the murder far surpassed the savage joy of revenge, however complete. He, the father, must take care lest he fall lower than the son. After all, Robert had committed no great crime. He had sinned against the stern law of nature and she had made him pay the price—as nature will ever do to those who break her laws. Robert had only fallen an easy victim to the snares set daily by society at large, for not a day passed but that some form of alcoholics was served upon the

tables of the poor as well as the rich. Even a great majority of the clergymen warmed their blood with it every raw morning. Numerous physicians prescribed it. No wonder that his innocent Robert had become a victim. John Drew was able to reason in this manner, and with this ability to reason there dawned a new purpose—that of giving his life for a nobler gain than revenge.

. . . . . .

In the meantime, Miss Grace King, in her home of pomp and splendor, had undergone as strange and as interesting a transition as can be imagined. Spoiled and petted though she was, there were many splendid traits in this young girl's make-up which, once developed, would make her a noble woman. Having traveled a great deal, she had seen a lot of society, had noted its frivolousness and lack of sincerity in many instances; and although she had often entered society with all the coquetry of a natural flirt, there was deep down in her woman's heart an undercurrent desire for true love and happiness.

Once when Miss Grace was barely seventeen she had come near losing her heart upon a Spanish violinist of great skill. Her quick and keen intellect soon discovered the man's perfidy; but her disappointment had been so great that for months she gave herself over to reckless abandon and frivolity. Up to the time she had met Robert, she had not quite recovered. She still tried to harden her heart against love, telling herself that no man was honorable and few women virtuous.

Her attitude toward young Drew was nothing new. And she was elated over the complete novelty

of the situation. It was not long, however, before the real condition of affairs asserted itself in a way which puzzled Miss Grace herself. She did not at first define her own feelings. Before she was aware of it, she began to thrill with pleasure whenever she caught Robert's burning glances. The young man's clean ideas, chaste thoughts, and high regard for womanhood fascinated and charmed her. She had met many men and had acquired the method of ascertaining their true character largely by their conversation. It is easy to judge the young man whose aspirations are pure and high, by their conversation. By this same method it is easy to judge the youth who reads much and discriminately, who finds his associates among the exemplary. Evil habits, low aims, and inferior manhood are nearly always disclosed in the conversation of the individual.

By this method Miss Grace had gained a knowledge of Robert's intelligence, purity, nobleness of purpose, and true manliness.

It charmed her soul in spite of herself.

On the very night that Robert wrote his last little note to her, she invited several of her friends to tea, including Robert, just for the purpose of having him near her. When she received the note which Robert wrote telling her of his illness and prospective journey, she felt a greater disappointment than she had ever felt in all her life. The whole entertainment was completely spoiled for her. When it was over, she fled to her room in a tumult of feeling which she could not account for. She sat staring into space—wondering at the strange, sweet emotion which

stirred her soul. Those who had called Miss King a heartless flirt would have formed a different opinion of her now if they had beheld her sitting there in the pale moonlight, her face suffused with a sweet, rich blush of a soul first awakening to the glorious and mysterious dawn of love, for at last the haughty Grace King loved!

Her love made her glorious. Not only had the face of her become softened and beautiful—she had become idealized. As three April days are enough for certain trees to put on a covering of flowers, so a few moments had been enough for her to put on a new mantle of beauty.

We sometimes see people cold and hard who seem to awaken, pass suddenly from frigidity and become all at once splendid, prodigal, and magnificent. So it was with Grace King. But alas! poor girl, she did not know that the most terrible disappointment was to come to her. She did not know that in a few days the angel of death would be knocking at the door of her lover—a knock which could not be denied. On the eve of her newfound joy she was destined to be cast into the deepest gulf of black despair.

The news came to her, without the slightest warning, like an eagle sweeping down out of a clear, blue sky snatches an unsuspecting victim in talons of unavoidable destruction. The news smote her a cruel blow. The world, so gloriously splendid only a little while before, became black and gloomy. For hours she lay beneath the stony weight of it, bruised, crushed, and broken. She walked about the house with tottering, faltering footsteps of an aged dame, her face grown old and haggard, the bloom of youth

and beauty fading under the stony despair which settled over her countenance. Her parents and friends wondered what had befallen the once brilliant young woman. They never dreamed of connecting her condition with the reported illness and death of young Drew.

On the morning of John Drew's departure to New Gate, a heavily veiled young woman stepped off the train at Hollyville—a young woman upon whom had befallen the utmost sorrow, that of yielding up her first and one great love of her womanhood to the corruption of the grave. The few who saw her standing over the grave of Robert Drew thought her some relative who had arrived too late for the funeral.

Grace King knew as she stood there that this sacred spot contained the body of the one man to whom she had given the crowning love of her womanhood. She had found out all the particulars concerning her lover's death, and she thought of all now as she stood there so utterly alone. She was by no means blind to the part which she herself had played in the tragedy. She realized with shame and great remorse that in her sinful recklessness she had helped to lay the foundation of her loved one's destruction.

In deepest contrition she bowed her head in silent prayer: "O God, let me not rest until this greatest curse of mankind shall be annihilated, and the country free from this evil which has so cruelly slain my newborn happiness." While she prayed there seemed to be a choir of angels singing in her ears. She raised her face toward heaven, and there was indeed a light in her eyes and hope in her soul.

CHAPTER V

LARRIMORE, the city clerk, sat busily engaged at his desk when a stranger entered. Something in the man's eyes attracted his attention at once. The stranger was John Drew, who did not hesitate but made known the purpose of his coming immediately. Straight to the heart of his mission he plunged, saying:

"My son, the light of my eyes, the idol of my heart, lies dead, and you are responsible for it! Tell me, why do you issue license to sell whisky, which means death to so many people, complete ruin for so many homes—which makes men lower than the insect which breeds in the mold?"

Larrimore sprang to his feet in complete astonishment. "You are mistaken," he cried. "I have caused no man to die! I do not know the man of whom you speak!"

"Then it was not you who issued Croggs' license to sell whisky?"

"It is I, for truth," said Larrimore; "but, my friend, I have no grudge against any man. I have only been doing what I've been commanded to do—my duty. I am simply a servant carrying out the instructions of higher authority. The city council is responsible for the licenses I issue. It is my duty to sell license to all applicants. I have nothing to do with the right and wrong of it. If your son became a whisky fiend, it is his affair, not mine!"

The heart of John Drew weakened. During all those years of frequenting saloons, and with all his

wisdom concerning whisky and its evil influence, he had never taken thought as to who was responsible for it, having always looked upon the barkeeper as a sort of irresisting devil and the sole parent of alcoholics. The sole cry of the reformers had always been: "Shun the barkeeper and his whisky." He stared at Larrimore while slowly it dawned upon him that the man was right. Since the barkeeper had (justly, it seemed) disclaimed the responsibility, and the city clerk had done the same with equal speciousness, it slowly dawned upon John Drew that he must seek further.

"When may I meet this council?"

"Let's see. There's a meeting to-night," answered Larrimore.

After John Drew had departed, Larrimore shook his head doubtfully, saying, "Some nutty, that."

That night the august assembly known as the city council—makers of laws or ordinances, regulators of public force, raters of city taxation, orderers of the issues of bonds, and constructors of public works, and makers of appropriations for public purpose—had a visitor in the person of John Drew. It was certainly a matter of serious import that brought him before that body of most experienced and self-contained citizens of New Gate.

He put on as serious air as his beating heart would allow, knowing that if he hoped to bring about a successful accomplishment of his plans, he must avoid all show of undue emotion—must not appear to be a madman or a crank. These men must be made to see the cruelty of allowing such a fatal proceeding as the free sale of liquor.

Therefore when the time came, his voice fraught with a deep earnestness, he told the story of his suffering and irretrievable loss—a story which could not fail to touch the hearts of all who listened to it.

"Gentlemen," he asked at the close of his narrative, "who is responsible for my son's death? I thought the responsibility rested with Croggs, the saloonkeeper who sold my boy the whisky; and had it not been for the timely intervention of Providence, Croggs would now be sleeping the sleep from which no man waketh. Croggs proved his innocence—that is, he convinced me that he is not directly responsible since he has been authorized by the city clerk to sell intoxicants to all who want them. His argument was logical; but when I had an interview with Larrimore, he also shifted the responsibility.

" 'The city council is responsible for the license which I issue,' he says—a statement which is also true—therefore I knew that I must look to you to exterminate this evil. Were I the only one that has suffered, I would make no complaint: but I speak in behalf of the thousands who suffer with me; the thousands who are yet to suffer on account of this evil: for as long as intoxicants are sold over the counter, vice and crime and untold suffering are bound to stalk abroad in the land. I feel that the rights of every human being are as sacred as my own. There are hundreds of others who have beloved ones, upon whom they lavish their whole life's love, hopes, and ambitions. Think of the number of these doting ones who are doomed to disappointment because those loved ones fall victims to accursed drink. Shall you men stand by and see the evil work go on

without raising a hand to stop it?—or, worse still—will you continue to take part in it, you who grant the barkeeper the privilege to sell intoxicants—will you do nothing? When I looked upon the face of my beloved son, cold in death, and realized the utter loss upon all that I had prided myself, I was mad with grief: sick to the very dregs of misery, hopeless, helpless—raging! I came here to kill Croggs; but he—wily wretch though he is—he is not responsible for the laws which you gentlemen make and enforce. Could you not make better laws?—laws that would prohibit the sale of alcohol, for instance? Think of your own sons. The time will come when civilized man will feel that the rights of every living creature are as sacred as his own. Anything short of this cannot be perfect civilization. Think of the millions destroyed not only in body but in soul by the ravages of alcohol! Their untimely death is a tragedy that we must abate."

At the beginning of John Drew's speech the board had listened with somewhat amused tolerance, then with a rising interest, and finally at the end there was not one among them who remained untouched. Among them there was one who was more impressed than the others; for he, too, was the father of a son who filled a drunkard's grave. Fortunately this one was Mr. Anderson, the most influential member of the board.

"Fellow citizen," Mr. Anderson said in reply to John Drew, "I am in deep sympathy with the grievous hurt you bear. I feel sure that all who have heard your story are in sympathy with you. Before I say what I must say ultimately, be it understood that

I am bitterly against the use of alcoholics—I suppose we all are. And I cannot leave unexpressed my natural perception of what is just and right. All that you have said is true. The naked truth has been demonstrated in thousands of instances, in close proximity to every one of us; but on the other hand, have you, who bear this grievous wrong, thought of our position in regard to prohibition? The sale of liquor is an important factor in the advancement of this or any other town. In the first place, it would be unwise for this town to enact prohibitory laws while the other neighboring towns permit the sale of liquor. I can point you to several towns where such laws have been enacted—Bloomington, for instance—it is a town which was once very progressive, but which now owes its deterioration to its prohibitory law. There is little hope for Bloomington so long as the surrounding cities keep open saloons. On the other hand, Tiny Town, only a distance of ten miles from Bloomington, prospers and flourishes under the wet measure. I am stating these facts, Mr. Drew, in order to show you how prohibition may be harmful to a city or town rather than beneficial. A dry city within a wet State is at a great disadvantage on account of rival prosperity of neighboring cities that are not dry. Mr. Drew, this is a matter which the State should settle, not the city. I hope that I have made my reason plain —why it is not wise for us to enact prohibitory laws for New Gate. However, the cause which you advocate is certainly a worthy one, and if you are persistent enough to carry the matter before the State Legislature, I promise you my support."

Bitter disappointment on account of this repeated shift of responsibility took possession of John Drew's heart at first, then slowly this feeling began to ebb—slowly it dawned upon him that the purpose for which he had come to New Gate was not to take the life of one man in revenge for his son's death, but to save the lives of thousands by removing the evil cause of their destruction.

He had a private interview with Mr. Anderson, and expressed his determination to take the matter before the State legislature. Mr. Anderson again pledged his support.

One morning, a few days later, Mr. Anderson sat in his office pondering over the situation in which he found himself placed, when a young lady was announced. Miss Grace King, her color heightened by a rapid walk against a frigid wind, entered the office. There was a lack of the accustomed breeziness about her. Her uncle noticed this as he took her hands and looked deep into her clouded eyes.

The natural Grace was always so full of sunshine and withal such a merry twinkle in her eyes that no wonder her uncle noticed the change. He refrained from questioning her, however, knowing that whatever the trouble was, she would be certain to confide in him.

Sitting by the fire, she seemed to forget his presence, and her thoughts were evidently heavy and gloomy.

Whatever it is, he mused, it is the biggest thing that has ever come into her life. Something very serious is troubling the child, no doubt of that. Grace troubled and old—why, it is preposterous!—

yet that clouded brow, that sad droop of her lovely shoulders—that black dress! Her uncle started in alarm as he noted the last suggestion of deep, unfathomable sorrow. "They're all wearing black nowadays," he reflected. Whatever it was, he wished with all his heart that she would reveal it. He was plunged into deepest concern when he saw two bright, big tears hang on her lids a moment, then splash upon her folded hands. The ice was broken. In wild abandon of grief, Grace threw herself upon her uncle's bosom and gave vent to a passion of tears.

"Oh uncle, I'm the most miserable creature on the globe!" she wailed. "My very heart is broken!"

"There, there," he soothed; then waited.

In passionate words which tore at her listener's heart-strings, Miss Grace told the story of her love and loss—every minute detail from beginning to end, not sparing her own part in the tragedy. When she had finished, her uncle knew that her woman's love—the love that comes to every woman but once in life—had been given too late.

The thought overwhelmed him with tender sympathy and pity that to this child, as dear to him as a daughter, there should come such a monstrous grief. He was utterly at a loss how to comfort her. In the presence of such overwhelming, sacred grief he was awed and silent. Tenderly he stroked her bowed head and mingled his tears with hers, praying that God would give her strength to bear this crowning sorrow of her life. They stood silent until she became calmer, then he gently placed her in a chair and waited for whatever else she had to tell.

Outside the wind swept around the corner of the house in frigid fury. Miss Grace shivered and clung to her uncle. She felt cold—and alone. Suddenly the half-burnt logs in the fireplace tumbled together, and then the flames leaped up anew—and crackled.

Mr. Anderson's thoughts reverted to that other story. "How strangely similar," he said quietly. Then he said to Miss Grace, "You haven't told me his name, dear child."

"Robert Drew," she whispered softly.

"Robert Drew?—John Drew's son—of Hollyville?"

"You knew him, uncle?" she asked, wistful as a child.

"Knew him?—er—no—not before to-day. I learned of him to-day in a very singular way. Grace, darling, the death of that young man has caused me to enter into a great undertaking." Then he told her the father's story, and finally of his promised support. "Grace," he said, "the story of that young man touched me deeper than anybody knew. And now, since it is the story that is nearest and dearest to your heart, so it becomes of first importance to me. I shall leave no stone unturned till I shall have done all that is within my power to obliterate the cause which has brought such a lasting sorrow upon your head, and which, if allowed to continue, is destined to bring sorrow upon so many others."

"Oh, uncle! God is just and wise. That was my mission here to-day. The hope of securing your aid in this great undertaking, which I myself have resolved to take up, brought me here to-day. I am so ignorant in affairs of this kind; but I knew you

would help me: you have never denied me anything." Then for a brief space they sat silent, each deep in the thought and feeling of the moment.

The deeper the feeling, the less demonstrative will be the expression of it.

Finally Miss Grace spoke again: "Do you think the undertaking most difficult, dear uncle?"

"Aye, little one—very much so. The thing is possible with a very improbable outlook. However, we will do our best—nothing short of our best. A man is especially and divinely fortunate, not when his conditions are easy, but when they are such that they evoke the very best that is within him, even if they provoke him to nobleness and sting him to strength. Any condition is fortunate that kindles his enthusiasm and inspires his will. I am glad to be instrumental in this work, for I, too, have a just cause for hating intoxicants, as you well know."

Again there was silence. Miss Grace remembered well the sad fate of her only cousin and playfellow. They had been like brother and sister until the awful drink habit had caught the young man in its clutches and hurled him to ruin and despair.

The painful silence was broken when her uncle looked at his watch and said: "I am to have a visitor this morning, my dear. Would you care to remain and meet John Drew—Robert's father? Or perhaps you'd rather not just now."

"I'll meet him now, uncle," said Miss Grace. Already his steps sounded in the hall. When John Drew entered, he noticed the deep embarrassment of the strange and lovely young woman, and wondered who she was.

"Mr. Drew, this is Miss Grace King, my niece," said her uncle. John Drew expressed his delight at meeting the young lady, but became somewhat perturbed when several minutes passed and still she did not depart. He secretly wished her a thousand miles away so that he and Mr. Anderson could be free to discuss their all-important topic.

To Miss Grace the resemblance of this man to Robert was striking. She began to wonder how she could make this man know that her love for his son was no light infatuation.

"Sit down," said Mr. Anderson—and straightway he began to lay his plans before John Drew. "I have a friend, a boyhood chum, who is a member of the legislature. I think he will be willing to draft a bill for us. He is one of my closest friends; was a special friend of mine when I was a lad. He loved my boy. I know that he will do all within his power for us. His influence is marked, and if anyone can be successful in getting an anti-liquor bill passed, he can."

"Then let us communicate with him at once and start about this work. My heart is full of it. I can do nothing but plan it day and night." John Drew caught the eager look on Miss Grace's face just then, and quickly curbed his excessive vehemence.

"We must go at this in a sensible way if we wish to be successful," said Mr. Anderson, thoughtfully.

"Grace, dear, our plan is to have my friend Howard draft this anti-liquor bill and present it to the legislature. He will, I am very certain, urge its consideration, doing everything in his power to create waves of sentiment that will influence its getting passed."

Seeing the look of wonderment on John Drew's face as he thus freely conversed with Miss Grace, Mr. Anderson thought it best to reveal the young woman's delicate relation to the matter.

"Mr. Drew," he said, changing the subject somewhat, "did it ever occur to you that your son might have left a young love somewhere to secretly mourn away her youth because of that young man's untimely death? Such has been the case. A young girl whose soul is as white as an angel's gave her love to your son, and although he loved her and declared his love, he died before he could make her his wife. That young woman, like yourself, has resolved to devote the rest of her life to the prohibition cause. That young woman is as dear to me as a daughter. So you see why the accomplishment of this work is almost as important to me as it is to you."

John Drew looked at the young woman in astonishment. This, then, was the Grace King, daughter of Raymond King, the spendthrift. He had known Raymond King all his life, but was not aware that he had a daughter until sometime before Robert's illness he had heard it whispered that Raymond King's daughter had become infatuated with his son Robert; but since Robert had never mentioned the matter to him, he had discredited the rumor altogether. It was no doubt, and no wonder then, that Robert had been lured into habits of intemperance. He loved this girl, daughter of a man whose entire house reeked with alcoholic drinks. It was a natural revulsion of feeling as he looked at Miss Grace. Under that gaze, which was not altogether kindly, the

poor young woman cringed. She knew that there was a certain amount of guilt connected with her love. She thought she read a verdict of condemnation in that burning glance of Robert's father. She cowered for a moment; but that great, deep love for Robert surged her soul. It gave her courage. She took a step toward John Drew, her head held high in queenly beauty, her bosom heaved under the tumult which stirred her soul.

"I love him!" she cried; "I will always love him! For this reason I shall devote the best that is within me to the temperance cause. No one shall do more towards purifying society, ridding it from alcohol's venom sting, than I shall do. I know alcohol's subtle power. I know youth's weaknesses. Trust me to do much towards remedying the evil that alcohol has brought to so many homes."

John Drew's heart was touched—was melted by her words. The hard feeling against her softened. After all, it was not his to judge her. She loved Robert, and since Robert had loved her, she must be all that a good woman should be. He went to her, took one of her little hands in his and reverently kissed it. Turning to Mr. Anderson, he said reverently: "Happy man to have won the love of such a maiden."

Miss Grace's uncle took her other hand, and the two men found themselves with the same vow, that each would do his utmost in wiping out the curse which was destined to rob so many other women of their lovers and their husbands.

. . . . . .

The interview with Mr. Howard was not very encouraging to our friends at first. He did not manifest, in the beginning, the enthusiasm that they had hoped for.

"It is a preposterous idea," he said, "to hope to rid the State of alcohol in a short time. Then, too, I was not elected from a prohibition platform, as you know, and for me to ally myself with prohibition, it might injure my political future."

"But think what a great benefit to humanity you would render should you be successful in getting the bill passed. You would stop a traffic which injures everyone in each community of the State by disturbing public order, by endangering personal safety, by demoralizing legitimate productive industries, and by cursing the homes on which, in the last analysis, a nation is built, and on which its future citizens receive their bent toward virtue. Think what it would mean to you to be able to prevent this injury, positive and enormous, to the State as a whole and to every individual in it. Does your fear of political injury outweigh your interest in humanity? Is it not enough to make you blush with shame when you realize that you are a member of the legislature which legalizes such a traffic, protects it with its courts, its police, its militia if necessary—nay, may even summon any citizen to take up arms in its defense? This is an opportunity for you to win for yourself as great glory as your future hopes could wish. A prohibitory law effectively enforced would serve to improve the character and lives of so many people. Saloonkeepers of the State would be forced to go into some decent business, which would make

them and their wives and children better. Many a young man who has been subjected to temptation and has just started out on the road to ruin would be saved by a law shutting up the saloons. Two thirds of the arrests made are for drunkenness. We cannot honor a Government which legalizes saloons, making men immoral by law. We must have a law that will shield and protect the young, the habit-bound and the helpless. Howard, the ultimate good accomplished by such a law will surpass your most sanguine dreams."

After listening quietly to what was being said, Mr. Howard spoke: "Success in this undertaking, as I see it, is very improbable. There is no doubt that nearly every member of the legislature looks upon saloonkeeping as a legitimate business. They will object on the account of the effect of a prohibitory law on the revenue of the State. Many of them hold that the liquor traffic has a natural right to exist, and that prohibition is opposed to personal liberty. They advance the argument that because one man out of ten becomes a drunkard and makes a fool of himself, there is no reason that the other nine should be deprived of the pleasure of drink."

"But you are able to meet such argument with good, sound reasoning," said Mr. Anderson. "So far as revenue is concerned, the saloon must pick the pockets of the poor to pour a thin golden stream of revenue. The man who thinks the saloon helps him to pay his taxes is in sad error. You can readily make it clear that saloonkeeping is not a legitimate business but a crime. Business is a service for profit; saloonkeeping is a profit without service.

If a man spends his money at the grocer's he has a supply of provisions in his pantry. If he deposits it in the bank he has a bank account to his credit. But if he spends his money at a saloon he has nothing to show for it but a brutal temper. Business is for public good, but crime leaves one the victim and the other the victor. The sale of liquor, therefore, is not a business but a crime against the man, the church, and the State. Those who think the liquor traffic has a natural right to exist are also in great error. There is no such thing as a natural right to commit wrong; nor should there be a legal right to injure society. Consideration of the public welfare overshadows the rights of the individual. On this account the so-called personal liberty argument in behalf of alcoholic drinks loses its force. The drink traffic of any State should be suppressed if the public welfare demands its suppression. Any condition that threatens and menaces society should be suppressed. In this way, Howard, you can meet these objections to prohibition impressively, I am sure. Come, give me your promise to do your best toward the passing of this much-needed law. Given a prohibitory law in the State, men like yourself can bring on a reign of righteousness that will do honor to your name forever."

Mr. Anderson extended an irresistible hand, and Mr. Howard grasped it in a heart clasp.

What the passing of that bill meant to John Drew, no one knew but himself. He hated alcohol as he hated no other substance in all creation. There could be no rest for him till he could see the entire State rid of it forever.

Miss Grace realized the responsibility which rested upon her, and the part she must take in the accomplishment of their undertaking. Knowing this, she resolved to do her best loyally and cheerfully, and suffer herself to feel no anxiety and fear. "My time and destiny are in God's hands," she said. "He has assigned me my place; he will direct my paths; he will accept my efforts if they be faithful."

And they were faithful. For a woman of Miss Grace's social standing to assume the rôle of leadership of a temperance movement is neither an easy task nor a very pleasant one. The fact that she was Raymond King's daughter had its disadvantages for her. The general statement that Miss Grace King had turned moralist and headed a temperance movement was discredited by most of her friends and viewed askance by several of them. The fact of her parentage had its effect in another channel. Having been a natural social favorite, she had little trouble in getting an audience when she wanted one. In spite of all handicap, she worked wisely and well. There seemed to be some inward wisdom working within her. She never took the wrong step; but every movement of hers was a carefully laid plan—worked out methods of handling the situation. Each effort was crowned with success.

Miss Grace at once became a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Heretofore she had looked with absolute indifference upon the work which this great society is accomplishing. Her constant study and increasing knowledge of the work done by that society opened her eyes. The knowledge imbibed a new determination within her: it created a

hope of what she might be able to do if allied with this great union. She took pride in reading the glowing accounts of its varied achievements in the uplifting of humanity. And well she might, for the great Woman's Christian Temperance Union, during the forty-two years of its existence, has done a great deal more for society than the average citizen realizes. In fact, few of the best informed are aware of the great work which it has accomplished. It has worked silently but very effectively. Besides the aggressive warfare it has waged against the alcohol evil, it has been instrumental in having many States enact laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors; laws raising the age of consent and providing for better protection for women and girls. In this way it has accomplished much for the promotion of social purity.

Miss Grace organized a local Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the effect of that movement was satisfactory. The women, reluctant at first, soon responded with enthusiasm. Miss Grace rented an office in one of the most attractive buildings in the city, furnished rooms at her own expense, purchased literature—the best that could be procured—literature that would stimulate their interest in the prohibition movement, and at the same time was of educational value. The importance of prohibition as an educational factor was not minimized by any means. The work accomplished by Miss Grace during those days and weeks and months will ever be remembered by New Gate.

Mr. Anderson observed all Miss Grace's movements with a great deal of pride. He admired her patience, gentleness, sweetness, and unfailing energy;

he even found himself renewed and invigorated and inspired by the higher spirituality of her—spirituality which is the power that displaces falsehood with truth, selfishness with generosity, and transforms the hard, cold, designing, worldly minx to a tender, sweet-souled, divine woman.

Her love and interest in her work brought such a degree of pleasure to Miss Grace that it served to purify, strengthen, and beautify her nature. There was never a time that she was idle. Her life and work gave her such a mental impetus that it filled her with a sense of both surprise and pleasure. She could hold an audience spellbound in her temperance lectures. It seemed that each thought expressed stirred her to fuller forms of expression—full and rich and deep, and never failed to arouse the interest of the least of her hearers.

At home and alone in her beautiful room, after some of those effective meetings, she often reviewed the events of the last few months of her life and then a consciousness of growth and change would occur to her. She felt as though some distinct boundary line had been passed, and realized that forces which she had not been conscious of possessing had been aroused. Hitherto the grooves of her life had been all too easy and careless. Thought, action, controlling power had been extended, it is true, but on matters where the mechanical part was easily arranged, and all that had been required of her was the executive faculty, which it is easy enough to employ with every facility at hand. Her life as a socialist had been entirely too light, too easy to bring out the best that was within her.

Now all that was changed. The problem of this new life and undertaking dealt with the stern realities. She had to awaken to many things: that nothing worth while is accomplished without great labor; that in order to realize one's hopes one must begin, live, aspire, realize the best ideal of the moment, and every earnest effort should lead the way to greater achievement.

Often her thoughts reverted to that short period of her life which marked its turning point—that wonderful, vibrating, palpitating starlight time of her awakening, against the memory of which there was always her careless flirtation; then the marvelous but gentle leading of God's hand. How short a time ago something akin to despair had seemed to belong to her lover's death! Something of that, of course, remained—would always be a grief to be borne, like any other visitation from the hand which is the Father's despite its discipline.

CHAPTER VI

One afternoon, after a very busy morning, Miss Grace decided to get a bit of recreation by taking a little pleasure trip of a few hours' duration. She wanted to be alone and quiet, therefore she chose to go away out beyond the extremity of the car line which ran past her home—"West End" they called it—the borderland of woods and hills and valleys. West End afforded a wealth of picturesque landscape, fresh air, and sunshine. The view of the landscape from the window all along she knew would be pleasing and refreshing.

It was a fine day: the temperature springlike, the air cool but delightfully bracing. Exquisite and indefinable indeed was the charm of the early evening, exhilarating alike to mind and body, communicating its ineffable buoyancy to the young lady's somewhat jaded energies; and for a creature so responsive as Miss Grace to resist its influence was impossible. Her spirits rose like mercury: the journey before her assumed the promise of one abounding in possibilities of interest and pleasure.

The trees, still naked, were nevertheless restful to look at. Such hidden promise in their millions of branches—promise of abundant life and beauty, sure of fulfillment. The fields, low hills, and woodlands, stretching away into the distance, were fairly magical in color—color which seemed to her a more delicate, ethereal, divine thing than she had ever seen or imagined before. Rounding a curve about two miles

beyond the city's limit brought her into full view of the city she had left behind. Here and there at various distances apart rose the graceful campaniles of distant churches. The sunlight glittered on magnificent architecture, and bathed the low, wooded parks in dreamlike beauty. Miss Grace felt her senses thrilled by the spell of the association—uniting the wild freshness of nature with the charm of civilization.

At the end of the car line she got off the car and aimlessly followed a little path which led up into the woods. The air was so fine, the sunshine so bright, that she found herself worked up into a transport of joy. She was glad that she had chosen this for her route. Out here she could be alone—away from the din of the city—to wander where she pleased. Little birds twittered among the naked branches as she walked on up the narrow path. She walked slowly, quite content to listen to their suggestive prattle. Her brain was wondrously quick to catch the promise of hope which they told of—the promise of spring and little warm nests full of darling young birds. Now and then she paused as if to better understand their chatter, then sauntered on up the path, trying as she went to understand something of the hushed and spiritual beauty of the land and the silent woods.

Two great, naked trees whispered mysteriously and mingled their sighs with the warbling of the little birds. There was no living soul to be seen as yet. That hour of solemn quietude and rest seemed all for her and her alone. She continued to walk on up the path until at a sudden turn she leaned forward in breathless surprise, for she found herself only a

few yards from a queer little hut. The thin spiral of blue smoke issuing from the rickety chimney told plainly that there were inmates. Miss Grace had never known anything about the life of the lowly. She had never entertained a thought concerning the lives of the ragged waifs who helped to make up the number of inhabitants of the city. Moved by a strange impulse, she went up to the house and knocked at the door, wondering in the same instant what she was going to say when her summons was answered.

A few moments passed in fruitless expectancy, then she knocked again, more loudly this time. Suddenly there was a slight shuffling sound, and then another sound of objects falling on the floor. Then she heard the soft footfalls of someone coming to the door. It was opened only a little way, just enough for Miss Grace to catch a glimpse of two piercing, wondering, half-frightened eyes of a child. A little boy regarded her in silence without opening the door any wider, then, reassured by the stranger's smile, he slowly opened it wider and stood looking at Miss Grace in open-eyed amazement.

"You live here?" asked Miss Grace sweetly.

"Yes, my lady," answered the boy, still regarding her in wonder. "Will you please—er—come in?" he asked presently in a little voice breathless with awe. The intelligence which marked the child's speech surprised the young lady very much. She had always associated coarseness and ignorance with peasant life.

She followed the boy into the cabin, the interior of which was of the very poorest, but scrupulously

neat and clean. That the little family which resided there was composed of people of gentle manners Miss Grace never for a moment doubted. She began to talk freely with her little, bashful host, soon gaining his confidence by her simple questions concerning his woodland surroundings.

He was soon telling her some of the wonderful secrets of his favorite haunts. He told her of many nooky paths and quiet corners down under the trees by the edge of the brook, where one might bask for whole hours in happy solitude—a solitude so complete that one might easily imagine himself miles and miles away from any city. "Often and often do I wander there," he told her, "stopping under the sweet, cool shade to read some favorite book, or giving myself to pleasant day-dreaming and air-castle building. "You just ought to see the brook," he continued; "it makes a musical, rushing and gurgling sound as it flows along." He told her how the moonbeams silvered the trees above it and transformed its waters to a sparkling stream of light. Then he told her of another dell where a little spring bubbled. "In the summer the bush creepers make a tangled tapestry around it, and crimson and blue wild flowers form dew-beaded chalices above it. Squirrels leap and frisk in the leafy boughs above; a few feet below it the tallest ferns grow," he said in this thrilly, poetic treble.

While the boy talked, Miss Grace noted his striking personality. She felt a thrill whenever he turned upon her his beautiful eyes—eyes habitually earnest and grave in expression, and holding in their brave, brown depths a sweet, childlike reliance and

dependency; eyes with a certain deprecating droop as if the child had known the bitterest sorrow, yet eyes which seemed to say, "I am truthful; I am born a gentleman."

Just in front of him, on a shabby table, there lay a book worn and ragged about the edges. Several others lay upon the floor. It was the sound of books dropping on the floor that she had heard while she stood outside the door awaiting admittance.

Miss Grace stooped and picked up one which lay near her. She gave a slight gasp of surprise when she read the title. "Plutarch's Lives" in a home like this seemed incredible.

Suddenly the door was darkened by the entrance of a woman, who did not try to conceal her look of surprise at the presence of a stranger. The little host rose hastily, saying, "Mother, dearest, this is Miss—" he hesitated, remembering that he had not yet learned his fair visitor's name.

"Miss King," said Miss Grace, smiling one of her dazzling smiles, which never failed to warm the coldest heart.

"I am delighted to meet you and your little son," she said in half apology for her strange and unusual presence in this house.

The touch of hauteur which at first marked the woman's bearing melted away and she beamed a mother's smile of welcome as she attributed this lovely young woman's presence to the fact of some secret intimacy with her little son. He was always making friends—that little son of hers.

Miss Grace took in the woman's personality at a glance, and was convinced of her gentle breeding.

Hers was a personality which mere words of description here cannot give justice. Her rare combination of gentle dignity with profound force, of a set resoluteness of purpose with a philosophical patience, her physical equipoise, even in the mere details of her simple dress, indicated a certain aristocratic exclusiveness. She somehow gave to Miss Grace the presentment of a queen who by the irony of circumstance was exiled in this lonely cabin of the woods—this solitary cabin of such pauperish mien. From the crown of her proud head to the soles of her shapely feet, she gave distinct evidence of gentle breeding.

Miss Grace's bearing—quite innocent of any prying curiosity or priggishness—soon evoked a spirit of friendliness and hospitality. "Jean," said the mother, addressing her little son, "bring the lady some of your nice brown nuts. The yield of nuts this year has been unusual," she said to Miss Grace, "and I have been fortunate in finding a ready sale for them. Jean and I have been especially proud of that fact since it has enabled us to buy another one of Jean's favorite books."

"Does your little son read those?" asked Miss Grace, pointing to the volumes of "Plutarch's Lives," Scott's "Lady of the Lake," and Hawthorne's "Twice-told Tales."

"O yes, and it is remarkable how appreciative he is. He has such quick perception. My little Jean has a passion for books. I cannot keep him supplied." Her voice and smile were so frank and pleasant, so free from the previous restraint, yet so respectful, so gentle and womanly, so tender in her praise of her son, that Miss Grace found her own

heart glowing. While they talked, Jean returned, bringing a bag of the greatest, brownest, most perfect pecans she had ever seen.

"O, thank you, thank you—what perfect beauties!" she said; and Jean's little heart glowed.

Miss Grace had spent an hour in the little cabin before she realized that the perfect evening was drawing to a close. In the midst of their happy chatter she received a sudden suggestion of coming night, and she also noticed that the mother's attitude toward her became mitigated with a certain uneasy apprehension which she could not conceal. She kept turning her eyes toward the door as if she expected someone. A certain fear crept into the eyes of little Jean. He gathered all his books and put them away. Over the mother's face there seemed to creep an expression of suffering. Miss Grace felt an oppression in the air, and wishing to avoid further intrusion, she arose to go.

She went swiftly to Jean, bent and kissed his high forehead which bore such a strong mark of intelligence; thanked him again for his rich gift—longing to slip a shining gold piece into the little hand. But thinking it might wound the little donor's pride to offer him gold for his generous gift, she thought of another plan and turned to say a parting word to Jean's mother.

"I shall see to it that Jean gets all the books he wants—may I?" she said, as she went towards the door.

"A-rr-r—books—blamed—b-books! I'll burn hell out of 'em!"

Both women started and looked toward the door. Rage, humiliation, fear, scorn—all struggled to gain supremacy in this mother's face.

Jean sprang up, his two small fists clinched in anger as he confronted the red-eyed brute-man who staggered into the room. It was his drunken father! Miss Grace fell back against the wall—astounded. She could not have received a greater shock if a lion had walked in at the door.

The drunken man made one stride toward the rigid, defiant form of his little son. Suddenly the mother hurled her body with all force against him—a blow which sent him crashing to the floor, knocking his head against the table as he fell. Miss Grace stared at this tragedy in frozen horror. All at once the woman turned to her:

"Go!" she said, "this is no place for you!"

Miss Grace moved swiftly out of the door and fled down the narrow road. The evening had lengthened into early twilight. She heard the plaintive, sad-sweet melody of the wood dove.

While she was hurrying along toward the street car, she heard the rapid approach of footsteps in pursuit. She started to run faster, but thought of little Jean and turned to look back without checking her pace. It was Jean's mother. Her beautiful face was pale and melancholy, her lovely eyes moist with recent tears; an expression of troubled passion lurked within their depths. What a piteous look she gave the wondering Miss Grace! What speechless sorrow swam suddenly into her lovely eyes! She strove to speak, but her lips only trembled. The tears began

to rain down her cheeks. Her tears, the sincere outflow of a pure woman's grief, fell like dew upon the younger woman's heart, and for the moment Miss Grace was stricken with sympathy.

"Oh, I do hope you can forgive me—forgive us, you beautiful creature!" she said between her violent sobs. "It was such a cruel blow to our happy little meeting—his coming in like that and threatening Jean—my little Jean! O, why did you ever come to our little cabin of sorrow? Forgive me for detaining you," she said, forcing herself to calmness. "I simply could not bear to have you leave without knowing something of our unhappy life—without warning you never to come again so long as my husband continues to drink as he does."

Miss Grace started involuntarily. That brute the husband of this queen—the father of little Jean —impossible!

"It is true," the poor mother moaned, as if answering Miss Grace's thought. "He is my unhappy husband—my little Jean's father. He was a good man once. He was honest, intelligent, upright, and a gentleman. He came from one of the best families, and was a man of great promise until he took to drink. He began his downward career a few months after our little Jean was born. His many friends induced him to join their fashionable clubs. He was so frank and open-hearted that they all loved him. He soon became a social favorite, falling in with all their ways, drank beer and whisky, and gambled. He continued to go on in this way until finally I awoke to the terrible truth that I was a drunkard's wife—too late! He went from bad to worse. All

we possessed was soon swallowed up in drink. Unable to bear the shame and the humiliation, I induced him to move here—away from my former friends—to see if I could cure him of the awful habit. I have only succeeded in seeing ourselves reduced to abject poverty, with no hopes of his recovery. Were it not for poor little Jean, I could commit suicide. Jean is my only hope of happiness in this life—my one ray of sunshine. He is an unusual child—precocious to the point of genius. If I can only succeed in keeping him from following in the footsteps of his poor father, he will be a wonderful man some day. Now you have learned our sad story, and for my son's sake I will ask you to please think kindly of us—Jean and me, especially Jean. Your coming to us in our poor cabin was like having a visitor from another world. Our grateful hearts shall never forget you. Jean will dream of you night and day; the memory of you will be an inspiration to him. Now good-bye forever, sweet young woman. May God bless you always!" With those words she turned and hurried back along the narrow road to her lonely home of sorrow, shame, and patient endurance.

Miss Grace's journey to her own home was a sad one. She could never forget the poor mother's story and little Jean's danger. Little Jean had impressed her deeply. Here was a lad peculiarly endowed with personal power. What a magnificent specimen of manhood this youth promised; what infinite possibilities beckoned him onward! What a sublime spectacle it would be to watch this youth going straight to his goal—working his way up through difficulties, surmounting every obstacle, encounter-

ing dangers—but never turning his eye from the goal! How beautiful was that mother's love! What a pity if this good woman's life should never be restored to its original height from which it had been so cruelly dethroned by alcohol! That possibility lay in the son's future attainments. It lay within his power to finish the wreck or to rebuild it into an elegant mansion. How Miss Grace adored the mother for cultivating her son's æsthetic faculties! It was evident that she had taught him to find in the landscape, the valley, the hills, the fields, the meadows, the flowers, the laughing brook which ran back of their house, riches that no money could buy—beauties that enchant the angels. How good the fact that she was teaching him every day to see them, appreciate them, to read their message, and to respond to their affinity! Surely this mother's beautiful patience, love, and endurance would have its reward. Surely—O God! surely the idolized little Jean would not one day become like his father—a physiological hulk wrecked on passion's seas and fit only for a danger signal to warn others. Surely this lad of such wonderful promise, and this beautiful, refined mother, were not destined to perish like lovely flowers plucked by the hand of a grim destroyer. Yet this thing, terrible as it seemed, was a probable possibility as long as alcohol flowed freely in the land. A vision of another little boy that had once been—her beloved Robert—rose before her. That young man, so beautifully endowed with manly qualities, in spite of his father's utmost caution, had fallen a victim to alcohol. No, there was no sure hope of escape for the little Jean. Under the prevailing circumstances only a

miracle could save him. But Miss Grace resolved that, if the proud mother would allow, she would aid largely in creating a chance for the boy.

A degree of sadness crept into Miss Grace's heart as she awoke to the sad realization of all the splendid opportunities which she had lost—opportunities for helping the struggling, ambitious poor to work their way to success. She thought of the many glorious hours she had ruthlessly wasted in frivolous pastime; the riches spent in useless pleasure—riches which might have helped some youth of promise—like little Jean. Her heart ached with pain when she thought of how those two, the mother and son, had to grapple with hardships, wrestle with poverty, in order to buy a book for Jean's hungry little soul. He would never starve for books again so long as she had a penny. She shuddered again when she thought of the awful danger in which he stood. Something must be done to save him. It could be done and it must be done. Alcohol must no longer continue to rob the world of its children of genius.

It was a very determined young woman who stepped off the car in the gathering dusk and ascended the elegant steps of her home. Henceforth nothing should daunt her courage. She felt that if she had a thousand lives to give, she would gladly surrender them all to the work of destroying the evil which threatened little Jean, and thousands of others like him. Now in her thought of active work for the good of humanity, all seemed to be moving toward peace; and Miss Grace could almost hear her lover's voice bidding her to be of good cheer and go on with the work which lay so plainly before her.

CHAPTER VII

At last the time came for the attempt at passing the all-important bill. The day—the very hour arrived. The bill had been formulated by Mr. Howard and started out on its interesting and intricate course through which all bills must pass before they are enacted.

It was referred to a committee for its critical consideration. Many of the enemies of the cause hoped that it would never be recorded; but through the influence of Mr. Howard, the bill was reported with the recommendation that "It do pass." It was then set as the special order for Thursday—three days hence.

The site of the State capitol was beautiful. It was built upon a gradual summit, from which there was a charming panoramic view of the whole neighborhood.

Thursday dawned—a fine day, with plenty of sunshine; an Italian sky above, and the air so clear and bright on every side made the handsome walls of the capitol glitter in such dazzling splendor that it hurt the eyes.

In obedience to the summons of the three ardent workers for the prohibition cause, there was a general gathering of rank, wealth, and beauty; and the doors of the capitol had never given admittance to more numerous guests than on that particular occasion. Without any extravagance of eulogy, the spectacle must be termed splendid. The most

beautiful sight of all was the turnout of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. There came representatives from all over the State. They came wearing their badges of white ribbon, and their merry eyes twinkled in excitement born of expectancy and hope. Their cheeks were brought into full bloom by the clear, frosty air.

The day was uncommonly fine—being a day which stood on the borderland between winter and spring. The air was just cold enough to be bracing, and lent its aid in making the whole aspect of the stirring citizens cheerful and full of hope. They heeded not the cold, for the air was so intensely clear and dry and bright that the temperature was not only endurable but delicious. Finally, when they occupied every space in the galleries, everybody seemed intensely interested and hopeful in the outcome of the prohibition bill.

John Drew, all his faculties stretched to a dangerous tension, sat near Miss King. His brain was a chamber of conflicting emotions. He sat tense, his hands clinched as if he would be ready to grapple with some foe. Miss Grace and her uncle never dreamed of the state of excitement their companion was in. Had they been cognizant of that fact they would have been somewhat alarmed for his safety.

Miss Grace herself was calm, confident, and hopeful. She had done her best loyally and cheerfully, suffering herself to feel no anxiety or fear. "My time and destiny are in God's hands," was her constant thought. "He has assigned me my place; he will direct my paths; he will accept my efforts if they be faithful."

The hour arrived. After devotion and the House had been declared ready for business, Mr. Howard immediately called for a reading of the bill. After it had been read, he made a short speech in which he gave logical reasons why this bill should be written in the statute books of the State. Then a general debate commenced. The ardor and enthusiasm manifested soon reached its height; the outlook for the passage of the bill seemed favorable. The weak-kneed arguments advanced by those who opposed State prohibition were met with denunciation and sound reasoning by the friends of prohibition—such arguments as these: "The liquor traffic has a natural right to exist"; "It is opposed to personal liberty"; "Prohibiton don't prohibit" (a statement which is as faulty in logic as it is in grammar); "Saloonkeeping is a legitimate business," etc. Some even advanced the argument that prohibition attempts to remove temptation from men, while God's plan is to permit temptation to exist in order to strengthen man's moral power, therefore prohibition is not in accord with God's method (as if man must take sides with the devil in order to prove the Lord a true prophet). "You can't make a man good by law," another asserted.

"But we have made men bad by law," was the answer. "The purpose of a prohibitory law is not to make the drunkard moral and the saloonkeeper virtuous, but it is to protect the public against wrongdoing. The supposition of any criminal law is that it should have a restraining influence among men. No doubt there is a good deal less of crime in the State than there would be if we had no criminal code.

By so much are men made better by means of law. A good prohibition law enforced would serve to protect the community against crime. Every community has this right to protect itself. You assert that we cannot make men moral by law: we assert that we certainly ought to stop making men immoral by law, for that is what we do when we tolerate laws which allow citizens to procure poisons which we know will destroy every vestige of morality in man."

"It is a bad thing to have laws that are not enforced," said another. "After all, a prohibitory law will not keep liquor out of the State. It will find its way anyhow and set up in the form of blind tigers."

"You make the assertion that it is a bad thing to have laws that are not enforced," came the answer; "we assert that it is a worse thing to have laws that decent people cannot respect; enactments which, instead of reflecting the sentiments of the best classes, only mark the level of morality among the lowest and vilest. Shall we put into our statute books only laws that can be enforced without difficulty? Whenever we discover an existing evil that is particularly favored by thieves, robbers, and all classes of criminals, something that will make trouble if we try to enforce laws that will prohibit it, should we legalize the thing, encourage it, promote and protect it in spite of the mischief it will do among men? No! Then we ought not to assume that attitude toward the sale of liquor. There is no menace to society more dangerous than the saloon. It is more dangerous than the gambling house; it is more dangerous than counterfeiting—more dangerous than any other evil in existence now placed under the ban of law.

Liquor is an evil that demoralizes everybody it touches from the time it issues from the distillery until it empties into the hell of death, dishonor, and crime. Think of the suicides, the insanity, the abject poverty, ignorance, and destitution all over the State. Think of the little naked children clinging to the sunken breasts of starved, cringing mothers, made cowards on account of dastardly husbands. Think of the talented men of genius, whose fine brains have been wrecked by the devil's agent—alcohol. It behooves us to be consistent and treat liquor selling as we treat any other dangerous evil—itself the most dangerous of all, because it has for its accursed merchandise men and women and their unborn children."

In this manner rival sentiment passed until the enthusiasm reached its height. Fortune seemed to smile in favor of prohibition. But there was one present who had not spoken. Pearson was an aged, gray-haired member of the legislature—a man whose influence was remarkable—a fact due to his age and experience. Hitherto he had been silent, listening to their arguments with a great deal of interest. Now he arose in all the calm dignity of his bearing and made some remarks which decided the fate of the anti-liquor bill almost instantly.

"In making the State dry," he said, "we will be doing it a much greater injury than benefit. We will succeed in checking the State's progress in a large measure—cutting off revenue, transferring our trade—and yet only leaving a very small clean spot on the liquor map. If a State prohibition law is passed, it faces a hostile attitude on the part of the Federal

Government in many particulars. The regulation of interstate commerce belongs to the national Government. A dry State cannot prevent other States shipping liquor into its territory. You are all aware of the fact that internal revenue collectors—representatives of the national Government—do issue license to sell liquor in dry States. The friends of prohibition will accomplish a greater work—the most effective work, and, as I see it, the only effective work—by ridding the nation of this evil. Let the Government, in which it is most largely vested, destroy it. Upon the Federal Government rests the responsibility of this traffic's red-handed crimes. Make the nation dry, and you will not only bring about complete prohibition, but you accomplish it without disturbing the State's commercial equilibrium."

John Drew had listened to the discussion, his heart buoyed up with hope one moment only to be followed by the next moment pregnant with uncomfortable doubts and presentiments. Toward the last he became uplifted again—so much so that his heart sang in his bosom. He even sat there looking down the vista of future years, seeing their untiring efforts crowned with success. He saw himself walking in the midst of it, happy and content all the rest of his life—happy in the glorious compensation for his son's death: a condition which not only gave him peace, but afforded a wellspring of joy to thousands. He beheld himself in a happy old age, gliding on through peace and prosperity to a last and holy reward, in which he would gain Robert, Alice, and everlasting life.

This ecstasy of thought carried him to the very pinnacle of hope—then the words of Pearson cast him back down—down to despair. As he hung upon Pearson's words, his intuition warned him that this man had blocked the way of the State prohibition law almost completely. Before Pearson ended his speech—before the vote was taken even, John Drew knew that all was lost. Suddenly he stopped up his ears, but in sheer fascination removed his fingers just in time to catch the words: "Let that Government in which it is most largely vested destroy it. Upon the Federal Government rests the responsibility of the traffic's red-handed crimes."

John Drew shuddered. An involuntary groan escaped his lips; his hands clinched themselves in stonelike rigidity. "My God!" he cried, "who is responsible?"

The vote was taken: prohibition was defeated.

John Drew never quite realized when or how he reached his room. All the old, pent-up grief and hurt which his hope of victory had kept quelled during the campaign now burst loose with redoubled force. All the terrible misery, the madness, the reckless despair crushed him with a greater force than ever.

He went and sat in a chair by the window. The sunlight streamed in upon him as if it strove to melt the heart fast turning to stone. "Is there a God—actually a God?" he cried. "Yes; but a cruel, unforgiving, awful Being—and he, in all his omnipotence has set himself against me—one poor, miserable soul! He whose proud will evolves the universe. He has arrayed his mighty forces of heaven and hell

against one miserable atom of his own creation, and the titanic wheels of life, time, and eternity are all whirling into motion to grind me, a poor worm, down to destruction! Why? Simply because of the fulfillment of that terrible promise—'Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.' God! What infinite pains he has taken to destroy me! My last hope—my last avenue to peace—gone!"

At that moment of John Drew's despair, Grace King and her uncle were engaged in a conference in which they formulated plans destined to plant hope once more in that heart of utter despondency.

As soon as possible, Miss Grace hastened to find John Drew. As she drew near to his lodging, her heart quivered with apprehension and fear of danger to her friend. Her steps sounded upon the threshold, and John Drew started as if he feared some fresh and final stroke from the hand of the Almighty—a final punishment avenging his profane thoughts of a moment ago. Without looking around, he sat quaking—expectant. A tender hand was laid upon his shoulder, a sweet voice which he had learned to recognize and to love came from the tender soul of Miss Grace: "Don't grieve so, dear friend; all is not lost—indeed, not so."

What was it she was saying? All not lost! How was that?

"We have been defeated in this only to make a bigger attempt. A brighter hope—the most glorious of all—lies before us. It is the hope for the greatest, most everlasting victory of all—national prohibition."

While John Drew listened, slowly the tension of

his nerves relaxed. A scalding moisture of unfalling tears blinded his eyes. He turned his face upward and looked at Miss Grace for the first time since her coming. As he looked up at her, the sunshine glittered on two great drops, as large as a child's tear.

Miss Grace was moved with tenderest compassion. Grief, disappointment, and sorrow had made this once strong man almost as helpless as a child. He regarded her with the wistfulness of a little child. She saw the dawn of a new interest in his eyes. She noted how white his hair had become during the last few months. She noticed how his hands shook: how weak he seemed, and helpless.

But she could not guess how her words planted new hope in his heart. How he loved her for giving him this hope! It was not false hope, either, and slowly his half-dazed brain comprehended her meaning. This, then, was God's mysterious plan of bringing about a greater achievement. It was indeed a new hope—the brightest ever.

Miss Grace was beautiful—comely and quiet, as if all her emotions had been subdued to the peaceful tenor of her life. Another step sounded upon the threshold, and Anderson entered. The sight of him gave John Drew even more assurance. Together the three talked and planned until the daylight lengthened into evening. This rejuvenated interest wrought wonders toward restoring John Drew's mind to equilibrium.

"Now let us walk somewhere in the evening sunlight," he said to Miss Grace, after their conference was over and Mr. Anderson had departed. "Exercise, fresh air, and sunshine are what I need."

As they walked down the street there was a singular contrast in their two figures: he dark and picturesque, one who had battled with the world, whom all suns had shone upon, and whom all winds had blown in a varied course; yet their faces, all unlike as they were, had an expression not so alien—a glow of kindred feeling flashed outward, born of one common interest. John Drew felt inspired by her patience and untiring energy. If this slip of a girl could bear up so bravely, why could not he? For her sake he must make a strenuous effort to overcome those periods of unreasoning madness. "We will fight this evil with all our might," he said to her; "neither shall we be at peace until we see this country free of its poison. Our country's prosperity and glory shall be our reward. There shall be no more brutal homes for young wives; no more shall the homecoming of the drunken wretch assassinate joy and murder happiness in that sanctuary of love—the home. Better homes shall mean better citizens; and out from ideal homes shall come ideal men who shall hold the highest offices of this country. May God give us strength to fight—to tear down the temple of Bacchus and lay the foundation of the magnificent temple of righteousness, wherein, with appropriate rites, there will be celebrated the religion of humanity! Little girl, we shall see it—you and I." John Drew had spoken more to himself than to Miss Grace; but now he turned to her and said: "I am glad you are interested as you are. Had it not been for your kindly words of hope, I would now be in the deepest, darkest despair. Nobody knows what the loss of Robert is to me. He

was all I had to live for—the center around which my life revolved. His happiness was the aim of my life. The love of him made up for everything else that I had lost. I loved him with a passion such as the angels know. His childhood was my sunshine—my springtime of life. All that I had missed in my own boyhood was made up for in Robert's.

"Robert was a perfect child and youth. I often wondered at God's mercy in choosing me for the father of such a son—then I'd remember that he was Alice's son, too; that he was the offspring of her great love for me. I could never feel myself worthy of such a wife as Alice and such a son as Robert. God was indeed merciful: my life, which could never have survived the loss of my young wife, was brightened and blessed by this perfect son of hers. My love for him helped me through all the long, dark years which followed—helped me when I needed help most, helped me not to lose sight of God! His young manhood was perfect and was my glory. Do you wonder then that I bear an everlasting hatred to the thing that wrecked his life? I shall never be content until alcohol be slaughtered in his stronghold. Your serene, confident, and hopeful energy serves to magnetize one's will and draw power toward one."

"Triumph of success comes not to doubt and disbelief," said Miss Grace softly. "It comes to sunny expectation, eager purpose, and to noble and generous aspiration. O, I have never regretted for one moment the step I have taken. I thank you for your faith and utmost confidence in me. O, I am so glad that I did not go all through my life with a selfish, purposeless heart. I am glad that my soul

had its awakening, even though it took sorrow to awaken it."

They walked on down the street slowly and in silence then. There was little need of words. These two had so much in common. When they had thus walked in silence for a few blocks, Miss Grace spoke: "How fortunate for us to have secured the co-operation of Mr. Pearson, of the legislature. He is a man of marked influence—and a gentleman. It was through his influence that we failed to-day, yet he afterwards destroyed all our bitter feelings against him by declaring his willingness to render all the aid in his power, should we make an attempt at national prohibition. He showed us wherein the task of getting a national prohibition bill passed is an enormous one, due to the fact that the world has not been prejudiced enough against alcohol.

" 'It is apt to be set aside as an issue of minor importance. Perhaps we may not be able to accomplish much for a long time,' he told us."

Miss Grace paused, then continued: "If this should be so—using the words of Catherine of Russia, 'I beg you take courage; the brave soul can mend even disaster.' "

Miss Grace had been acquainted with Robert's father only a few months, but her intuition told her that he would need such advice often. His mind and heart, wrenched and torn as they had been by grief and disappointment, were on the verge of breakdown.

He answered not a word, but turned his eyes upon her—a gaze that was eloquent and deep in gratitude and admiration. He thought he had never seen her

so glorious. Her beauty was like the noonday sun—it made him glad, it made him resolute, it imbibed him with new courage. This woman of Robert's choice was not only very beautiful, but very intelligent. For a woman to be wise and at the same time womanly is to wield a tremendous influence which may be felt for good in the lives of generations to come.

Time passed. Weeks lengthened into months, and the months slipped by until a whole year had passed. In the meantime the advocates for national prohibition made preparations for their ultimate effort. The first step they took was to confer with members of Congress who were from their State. Unfortunately, each senator and representative absolutely refused to take the initiative in introducing a national prohibition bill before Congress. Their main reason was, that prohibition was not in their party platform. Each of them feared that such a measure might mean his political assassination.

Let me beg of my readers not to be too harsh in their judgment and dub these men as cowards because they feared political injury. Remember that self-preservation is the first law of nature. It takes a hero to brave any kind of danger.

But in providing heroes in time of crisis, America has been most fortunate. In the dark days of the new Republic, when a hero was needed to lead the untrained soldiers against the British troops—there was a Washington. When that great curse, human slavery, threatened to rend the American Government asunder, there was a Lincoln to avert the disaster.

Nor did the friends of national prohibition have to wait long to find a champion for their cause. In an adjoining State there resided a man who had already startled the world with his daring and patriotism when he, an officer in the American navy, at the risk of his own life, braved the perils of the sea and the deadly fire of the enemy in order to render his country a service which should always live in the hearts of a grateful people. By this brave deed he had already sprung into nobility, worth, and service.

For months the heroic deeds of this man had been on the lips of every American. He was now a member of Congress, a representative from his State, and his voice had often been heard in Congress in favor of social and political purity. He was also known to be a friend to the temperance cause. Miss Grace had recently heard him deliver an eloquent speech before the Woman's National Temperance Union. In this speech he had declared himself in favor of national prohibition. She had never before heard words used as such powerful weapons in the denunciation of wrong and the exposition of fraud. His scathing denunciation of alcohol had made a deep impression upon her.

After they had failed to secure the consent of the congressmen from their own State, they became somewhat baffled; but Miss Grace, remembering the eloquent speech from the noted hero of the State of G——, remarked: "If we only possessed claim enough upon the friendship of Mr. Gibson of the State of G—— to approach him with this proposition, I feel sure that we would be successful. But perhaps it would not be just to ask him to hazard his political

future by serving us, since he is not a representative from our State."

"But Mr. Gibson is a personal friend of mine," said Mr. Pearson. "I've known him ever since he was a child. His father was my boyhood chum. Gibson is not the man to fear political death or any other death when he feels that the sacrifice is for the cause of righteousness."

They communicated with Mr. Gibson as soon as time permitted, and received the very encouraging information that he would gladly serve them—in fact, was himself planning to prepare a bill to be presented at the next session of Congress.

CHAPTER VIII

ONE week before the time of that session of Congress in which the national prohibition bill was to be introduced, John Drew went to Washington. His impatience to be there got the better of him. Not that he cared for the city itself, but he had an indescribable longing to get in sight of the National Capitol wherein in a very few days a bill was to begin its intricate journey. Whether the outcome would be favorable or not, John Drew could not tell. He was only sure of the intense longing in his heart, the burning wish which seemed to consume his soul.

It was in the month of December and very cold. The day of John Drew's arrival in the city of Washington was bright and crisp and exceedingly cold. At first sight of the city an indescribable thrill passed all over his body. It was the mingling of a thrill and a chill, and it made him shiver. His intense eagerness to see the Capitol was childish. Presently when he stood in full view of the magnificent building, a glow of delight overspread his whole countenance. He had a perfect view from where he stood. It impressed him as a very fine building indeed, placed as it ought to be upon a noble and commanding eminence, from which one could have a splendid bird's-eye view of all the adjacent surroundings.

John Drew gazed long and earnestly upon that great structure wherein only a few days hence he hoped to realize the greatest wish of his heart. He had yet to view the interior; but just now the ex-

terior was quite enough. His imagination penetrated the magnificent walls and handsome pillars of stone and created impressions of the live pillars of the great Capitol. His imagination pictured this public body, an assembly of men bound together in the sacred names of Liberty and Freedom—a body of men who applied themselves in this new century to correct some of the vices of the old, to purify the avenues of public life, pave the dishonest, dirty ways to position and power; and who made laws for the common good of mankind. He saw among them intelligence and refinement; the true, honest, patriot heart of America—men of highest character and great abilities; men who stood hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder for the benefit and progress of their country.

Seeing this vision, John Drew smiled a most gracious and benevolent smile upon the great Capitol. Reluctantly he turned his face toward the city. To him it represented the whole country. His gaze became fixed upon its mass of buildings, while again his imagination penetrated the walls of brick and stone, and conjured visions of the lives of the inmates. From every chimney the blue smoke curled upward in the frosty air like incense from the altar of domestic peace. In every home he beheld Bacchus lying dead—his evil cup shattered into a thousand fragments. On every hearth he saw bright fires crackling—fires that cast ruddy lights upon glowing children, offsprings of healthy, temperate parents. Their childish laughter filled his soul with symphonies, soft and sweet—laughter which fills the eyes with light and the heart with joy, laughter which catches, holds, and glorifies all the tears of grief.

In every home he saw Queen Love—the morning and the evening star—shedding her radiance upon the parent and the child—Love, the mother of beauty, the mother of melody, the builder of every hope, the kindler of every fire on every hearth—Love that makes earth heaven and men gods. And there was an ache of joy in John Drew's heart, for the whole of the horizon was filled with glory and all the air was filled with wings.

With this twin vision in his soul, John Drew went on his journey to the hotel where he was to abide until that day should come when that dignified and decorous body of Congress should confirm his hopes and send him forth along the long-sought avenue to peace. The evening of his first day in Washington came to a happy close. Midnight and sleep blotted out those happy thoughts and visions, and John Drew slept the peaceful sleep of a tired child.

For the first day or two after his arrival the city provided many objects of interest which kept him well occupied. On the third day there occurred an incident which, trivial as it seemed to everybody else, caused such a turmoil of feeling to arise in the heart of John Drew that it threatened to shatter all his glorious dreams of the future. When he took his place at the table for dinner, he noticed the presence of a strange gentleman of striking appearance at the table opposite his own. This table was set for one, and an expression of expectancy lighted up the face of the head waiter—who himself brought a bottle of most carefully decanted red wine, examining the delicate color through the fine glass with the air of a great connoisseur.

To a less casual observer the man's appearance would have been less marked. He was a man of about forty-five perhaps, carefully dressed—a superb figure, with a strong face and eyes of gray velvet, lighted at times with curious little steel points. A very attractive and gentlemanly person to an ordinary observer; but somehow the man caught and held John Drew's attention in a magnetic grasp. John Drew also noticed the obsequiousness of the waiters, who passed everything to the dignified servant, to be placed before the gentleman by his hand. After the red wine had been poured into his glass, the gentleman lifted it up to the light to see the clear ruby, then swallowed a single gulp, and nodded his approval to the waiter, who stood anxiously waiting his verdict the while.

John Drew watched every movement of the strange gentleman—watched without knowing why: saw him finish his fourth glass of wine, and seeing, shuddered. But why should he shudder? Wine had been served daily—though perhaps not such expensive sort—ever since he had been there at the hotel. Why should not this man take it? Why not?

It was not until after the stranger had finished his meal and had passed out that John Drew had the question answered for him, by learning the identity of the man. "It is Senator B——, of K——," he was informed.

Senator B——. One of that chosen number! John Drew almost rushed out the door into the open. It was a miserable day—chilly and raw, a damp mist falling, cold and wintry. John Drew had seen a very ordinary thing—a senator partaking of alcoholics—

that was all; but when he reached the cold pavement he seemed to feel the ground tremble beneath his feet. The cold mist shivered his frame: fear gripped his heart—vague and terrible.

But that was not all he was to see. Other members of the legislative body arrived. Several of them drank freely of alcoholic drinks—expensive wine and beer.

John Drew watched the actions of these men as a child might watch and wonder at the deeds of some worshiped hero, suddenly caught in the act of doing those things which he himself had been forbidden to do. He watched, fascinated—struck with horror.

When Miss Grace and her uncle reached Washington, they found him in a peculiar state of mind which neither was able to fathom. They could not account for the wistful, childish expression in his eyes. The groping, searching way he had was puzzling. They were unable to analyze the peculiar expression which came over his face whenever he was thrown into the presence of any member of that distinguished body.

Miss Grace observed all this with a secret dread, fearing that John Drew's mind might give way under the strain. She strove with all her might to divert his attention as much as possible by going about the city, visiting places of interest, pointing out to him many interesting curios and mementos of historic events. After such jaunts he would always seem to be restored almost to normality—at least he tried hard to make a brave showing before his friends. But in his room, alone, he would pace the floor for hours until he would almost fall from exhaustion.

After that he would go to his bed to sleep and dream, sometimes of turbulent waters and violent earthquakes—then again he would dream of a vast assembly where sat many legislators, who uttered coarse threats, who passed words and even blows such as drunken men deal upon each other; men who practiced despicable trickery against one another, and engaged in dishonest faction in its utmost depraved and unblushing form.

Those first days of Congress' session were very anxious ones for John Drew. Even Pearson, Anderson, and Miss Grace found their blood tingling with intense excitement. But never in the history of his life had John Drew passed through such an ordeal of hope and despair.

At last the day came—then the very hour, when the Gibson bill for national prohibition, prohibiting the sale, manufacture, transportation, exportation, and importation for sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes not only in the United States, but in all territory subject to the United States, was presented and voted upon in the House of Representatives. It was on the 23d of December, a day remembered ever afterwards by the friends of national prohibition.

The vote was taken; but those who were in favor of national prohibition were in the minority. The enemies to the cause, using principally the States' rights theory as a bulwark against national prohibition, had won.

But in spite of the fact that the Gibson bill had been defeated, the vote in Congress showed a great triumph for the national prohibition movement, 386

of the 433 members of the House declared themselves on the Gibson resolution for constitutional prohibition. The significance of the action was striking. The vote in favor of the amendment, according to statistics, was 197 to 189 against, making a majority of only eight of those voting.

But perhaps more striking than the bare majority of the membership voting is the fact that seventeen State delegations voted solidly for prohibition, and twelve were for it by a majority vote. Only eight States voted solidly against prohibition, and only nine additional States gave a majority against.

In view of the fact that only thirty-six States are needed to ratify a constitutional amendment providing for national prohibition, the significance of the action which placed the congressional delegation of twenty-nine commonwealths out of forty-eight behind the Gibson bill is very striking.

"This achievement far surpasses my expectation," said Mr. Pearson. "It makes me believe that the liquor traffic in America is doomed beyond doubt. Another such glorious achievement and the victory is won. The States' rights theory will be comparatively easy to overpower. There is nothing more insincere than the statement that national prohibition will violate the doctrine of States' rights."

Suddenly they thought of John Drew. A simultaneous spasm of alarm passed over each of their faces. Without another word they hastened to his apartment, where they hoped to find him and give him comfort. With heart almost sick with misgiving, Miss Grace led the way upstairs to his room. There they found him in a most pitiful state. The

look of despair on his face was touching indeed. A great wave of pity swept the tender heart of Miss Grace.

"O, my dear, my dear!" she murmured as she knelt by his chair and stroked his trembling hands. "You must not give way like this. Try, O try hard not to give way! Don't you see that it could not all be accomplished at once? There must be time—a long time, perhaps, and the victory will be more complete. Do you realize just what this one single effort of ours has done? Tell him, uncle—tell him just how much ground we have covered."

All the while the two men talked, John Drew sat still—his eyes dilated, his breath coming and going quickly, but saying not a word. Any man of more rational mind would have rejoiced in the achievements of the day. Miss Grace and the others sought wildly for words of comfort, striving to show him the folly of giving up in despair, now that they had accomplished so much and the future looked so bright.

But John Drew made no response whatever to their cheering words. This alarming attitude of his made it evident that a physician was needed at once.

But there was no real healing for John Drew. His hurts had gone too deep. His passionate heart, ever secretly brooding on the grief he had borne, had caused his mind to weaken and to almost give way.

. . . . . .

All was still in the bedchamber at Hollyville where John Drew lay—faded, weary, and still. Weeks had passed; but with him their progress had been scarcely noticed. He had lived in a sort of semi-

somnolence—a state of stupid, dull indifferentism as to what went on around him. A sort of dream-daze, wherein hazy recollections, dubious wonderments, vague speculations hovered to and fro without his clearly perceiving their drift or meaning. He was not in any pain—but was calm with the dreadful calmness of stupefaction and exhaustion. His once splendid body had worn to emaciation. His eyes were large and eloquent of calm despair, born of defeat.

Miss Grace rarely left his bedside, but sat waiting for what she knew must come soon. She wanted to be near when the soul of John Drew, the patient long-sufferer, should enter into that mysterious Beyond.

One evening—the last that John Drew spent on earth—Miss Grace sat quietly by the window in the invalid's room looking out over the landscape of barren fields and hills. The sun had sunk low in the west, its slanting rays streamed in the window under the half-lowered shade and reached across to the bed where the sick man lay. Miss Grace had not observed that it shone full on his face.

From the window one could always have a perfect view of the setting sun. Away in the distance, and rising above all the suburban housetops, there was a long range of hills. Many a time had Robert stood there watching the perfect disk of fire as it slipped slowly behind these hills out of sight.

All was quiet—and John Drew lay watching the sun's dazzling, blinding splendor as it sank lower and lower. The light did not seem to affect his eyes in the least, and there was a rapt expression on his face. Suddenly Miss Grace looked around and

started up in reproach at her neglect—hastily reaching to pull down the shade and shut the offending sunlight from the sick man's eyes.

"Please do not!" John Drew's voice was strikingly clear and distinct in spite of his weakness. Miss Grace stood transfixed at the divine expression of his face as he watched with unblinking eyes the sun as it went down. Somehow she knew that John Drew was at last fulfilling his day and was passing away just as the sun was passing. The whole room was lit up with a holy radiance—not of earth, but of heaven—as the sun sank steadily, slowly, round and shining, without a single cloud in the horizon—beautiful as she had never seen it before. The air was so clear that she could note the very instant that it touched the horizon. Slowly it journeyed down to its setting, lower and lower still.

All of a sudden John Drew stretched out his arms and cried in a clear, triumphant voice: "Alice —Robert—Christ!"

Of the sun there remained a crescent, a line, a sparkle of light, then the sun was gone—and at that very moment John Drew entered into eternity.

The death of John Drew was a shock to Hollyville, and to New Gate especially. Everyone who resided in those two towns had become acquainted with his sad story. By some he was regarded as a crank: but others knew that he suffered a real grief.

The next day after his death the newspapers of Hollyville and of New Gate gave brief accounts of his career, and a detailed account of that part which related to the death of his son, and the effect of young Drew's death upon the father. The account

in the New Gate paper told how the parent, crazed by grief after his son's death, visited Croggs's saloon with vengeance uppermost in his mind. But the saloonkeeper pleaded that he was not the guilty one. Pointing to his license, he maintained that if wrong had been done, those who commissioned him must be guilty. Drew then went to the city clerk, the city council, the State's legislature, and finally carried the matter before the national Congress—each of which disclaimed the responsibility: the city claiming that this matter should be referred to the State; the State, that it should be referred to the Federal Government, and Congress claimed that national prohibition would violate the doctrine of States' rights, that it is a matter which the States should settle themselves.

These conflicting contentions on the part of the lawmaking bodies, from the city council to the National Congress; the perpetual shifting of responsibility for the great alcoholic evil, together with his recent bereavement, wrought so heavily upon his failing strength that he succumbed beneath the burden, which was too heavy to bear. "Thus ended the life of one of the most respected citizens of Hollyville."

In the *Sentinel* of Hollyville there appeared the following editorial, under the caption of

"WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?"

"The *Sentinel* desires its readers to answer the above question—each for himself. We will state the facts in John Drew's case as they were presented to us:

"About thirty years ago there moved to Hollyville, from an adjoining county, a man and his wife. The woman was young, beautiful, and accomplished. The man was a descendant of one of the best and oldest families in the State. But through heredity and environment he was in great danger of becoming a drunkard. In order to avoid this, his wife induced him to move to this county, which, as you know, was the first county in the State to go dry by local option. These two made their home here in Hollyville and the man became engaged in the mercantile business, afterward becoming one of the most successful merchants of the town. This man was none other than John Drew, son of the well-known Colonel Hamilton Drew, of New Gate. In less than two years after their coming to Hollyville, the young wife died in giving birth to their first child—a boy. John Drew quite naturally bestowed all his affection upon his child. As this boy grew, the father was scrupulously careful about his training, seeing to it that he received not only the proper intellectual training, but the proper physical and moral instruction as well. In the careful training which the lad received the question of alcoholics was omitted altogether. The father had, as he thought, a good reason for this. The boy was heir to the inherited tendency to drunkenness; and the father, fearing to arouse the boy's curiosity—with a great amount of which he was especially endowed—he thought it best to omit the subject of alcoholics altogether. This may have been a sad error; but it was thought to be the best policy.

In this manner the son grew to young manhood

with practically no knowledge concerning the great, impending evil. He finished his college course in Hollyville College a few months before he was twenty-one years old. He graduated with honors, and was not only the idol of his father's heart, but was the pride of all Hollyville.

"Shortly after he had finished his course in school, he accepted a position in New Gate, the former home of his father. Here, through a combination of circumstances, he learned to drink; and drink led to his death, for it was while under the influence of whisky that he was exposed to excessive cold weather, the result of which exposure caused him to contract a fatal illness which resulted in his death. The story of that young man's death is the saddest that has ever occurred in the history of Hollyville.

"The terrible idea of revenge—murder—took possession of the grief-crazed father, and led him to seek the man who sold his son the poison, and to make him pay for the deed with his own life.

"But when confronted by the irate father, the saloonkeeper lost no time in showing him the commission or license which he had obtained at the City Hall. 'The city clerk,' he pleaded, 'is the one who is responsible.'

"John Drew visited the city clerk, who in turn pleaded that he was only a servant of the city government. After hearing the city clerk's story, John Drew decided to give up the idea of revenge, and resolved to dedicate both his time and his fortune to the work of ridding the State entirely of this evil.

"His attention had been directed to the city coun-

cil by the city clerk, but this body disclaimed all responsibility, and directed him to the State legislature.

"The State legislature said that the responsibility for the liquor traffic rested with the National Government. Then John Drew, with certain other sympathizers, took the matter before the United States Congress. But Congress claimed that prohibition is a matter which the States should settle.

"Then John Drew lost all hope. Disappointed, discouraged, unable to longer endure the strain, he died, leaving the whisky evil still in the country—the mystery still unraveled.

"There has always been a tendency for people to disclaim responsibility for public evils. Perhaps in countries where the government exists for the benefit of the royal families; where the expressed will of a king is the only law, everybody except the king himself can claim immunity from responsibility: but in a Republic like ours, where the government is of the people, for the people, and by the people, it is quite different.

"But it is not our purpose to accuse. We leave to our readers to say who is responsible for this liquor evil—who is responsible for that recent tragedy which wrecked the lives of that honest, industrious father and that beloved son.

"To be candid and just, although it is humiliating to do so, we must claim a part of the responsibility as our own. The *Sentinel* has always been an advocate of prohibition: but after saloons had been driven from Hollyville and Marshall County, we regarded our task as finished. In this we were mis-

taken. The press is largely responsible for the death of thousands of young men who fill drunkards' graves, and for a great deal of the ignorance, poverty, and suffering throughout this country—yes, we are responsible. Now, since God has given us light to see our duty, we pray him to give us strength to discharge it."

The above editorial, read by hundreds of people, had its effect. It was the aim of the editor to set the minds of his readers pondering the liquor situation, and in this he was successful.

The minister of St. Mark's Church, in Hollyville, and who was the pastor of the two deceased, read the editorial, and felt that a great measure of the responsibility rested upon him. Although he had often availed himself of the opportunity of denouncing the liquor evil from his pulpit, he knew that he had not done his whole duty. He had not done his very best in pledging the youth and populace of his own parish to do their utmost toward the elimination of alcohol from their own homes and the homes of their various friends.

When he thought of how he had neglected so glorious an opportunity, he felt ashamed—and with this there came a resolution to henceforth make his pulpit the freest forum from which his voice should constantly ring in denunciation of alcohol.

Doctor Morris, the family physician of the Drews, after reading the editorial, and after reviewing the pathetic actions of his half-demented patient during the last year of his life, found it impossible to sleep that night. Every time he closed his eyes, that

question, "Who is responsible?" would force itself upon him in such a tormenting and accusing way that he began to feel very like a fugitive from justice who is being sought to answer some serious charge. The fact is, Doctor Morris was being arraigned before the bar of his own conscience; and the indictment was: "Thou art responsible for the conditions which led to young Drew's death." So strong was the evidence in the form of what appeared to Doctor Morris as neglect of professional and official duties, that he was oppressed with a sense of guilt.

Doctor Morris had served as a city and county health officer, and was at this time a member of the State board of health. He was regarded as a very efficient officer—aggressive in the fight for better sanitary conditions, untiring in his efforts toward the eradication of preventable diseases. Upon the suggestion of the board of health the legislature had enacted laws seeking to protect the people from those diseases supposed to be caused by flies, rats, the bites of rabid animals, mosquitoes, etc. But not one word of warning against the diseases caused by alcohol had ever been issued by him or any other member of the board. Why should alcohol enjoy such immunity from the attack of the guardians of the State?

No one knew better than Doctor Morris of the different forms of mental and nervous diseases due to the use of alcohol. He was fully cognizant of the fact that the majority of the inmates of the insane hospital, almshouses, and sanitariums, suffering from the different mental and nervous psychoses, are primarily victims of alcohol.

"There is no doubt about it, Doctor Morris," he

said, addressing himself as he rose to a sitting posture in his bed, "you are in a large measure guilty, not only of the death of young Drew and many others, but you are equally responsible for the conditions in which the inmates of the insane asylum yonder is found—responsible, quite responsible," he repeated. "It is quite evident that I am guilty of a neglect of duty that I am not only under obligation to perform, but a duty for which I am being paid to perform. The task of ridding the State of the saloon is primarily the work of the medical profession." That night Doctor Morris got consolation only by making the resolution to bring the matter up at the next meeting of the board of health. He would induce the board to suggest a State-wide prohibition law as a health measure. He also decided to prepare a paper to be read before the next session of the State Medical Association on the subject, "INEBRIETY AS A DISEASE." He would perhaps be invited to read it also before the American Medical Association. "I will not rest," he said, "until not only my State but my country shall be free from alcoholism."

The next morning after the editorial appeared in the *Sentinel*, Mr. Douglas, secretary and executive officer of united charities of New Gate, on reaching his office, met a strange visitor—a man attired in the garb of a workman. He presented the aspect of an engineer, a fireman—or perhaps a blacksmith. It was evident that he had been and was even then suffering great mental anguish. Mr. Douglas thought that his visitor was a poor man, without employment —a man who had sickness or perhaps death in his family, and was there for the purpose of seeking aid.

"What can I do for you?" asked Mr. Douglas.

"I want to ask a favor of you," was the visitor's reply.

"I know that," said Mr. Douglas somewhat impatiently; "but what do you want?"

"I want to leave $1,500 with you, which I want you to accept; and in the name of the trustees of this institution, the titles to two tenement houses on Fifth Street. The income from the rent of these houses, together with this $1,500, I want you to use for the relief of destitute families of drunkards, including orphans and widows of drunkards."

This stranger was none other than Croggs—the Croggs whom we formerly knew as the saloonkeeper. He was now employed in a blacksmith's shop. Croggs gave up his barroom business shortly after his experience with John Drew. Until then he had not thought very seriously on the comparative merits of the different professions or of the different forms of business. He had never studied political economy. He had been brought up in a saloon. His father had been a saloonkeeper, and at his father's death he of course came into possession of the business by inheritance.

Croggs heretofore had never stopped to think of where he would be listed in the catalogue of laborers —whether he would be classed as a productive or as a non-productive laborer. He had not considered whether it was right or wrong to conduct a saloon. It was not until after his interview with John Drew that he realized the fact that the wealth of the community was not increased by his labor, but, on the other hand, his business served to incapacitate real

productive laborers. He could not remember ever having made anybody happy, but had spent his whole life spreading misery and wretchedness.

At first Croggs tried to console himself by saying that society permitted the saloon—seemed to demand it—why should he care? But somehow Croggs never did become reconciled to his liquor dispensation again. He had, as I think most individuals have, an innate desire to be useful. Being now thoroughly convinced that he was engaged in a business which was worse than useless, he decided to sell out. This he did, and secured employment in a blacksmith's shop. Here he put forth every effort to master the trade. When he had made an inventory of his resources, Croggs found that he was worth $1,500 in cash, and had two tenement houses which would yield him an income of not less than thirty dollars a month. He first decided that he would put this away in reserve against a rainy day, but after reading the editorial, "Who Is Responsible?" in the Hollyville *Sentinel* and realizing the part which he had played in that tragedy—and in hundreds of others—he decided on another use for the little fortune which he had laid up for himself.

Said he: "Others may have been indirectly responsible for young Drew's death, but I am directly responsible. I sold him the poison which ended his life. I am responsible for hundreds of widows and thousands of fatherless children. My whisky and my beer have washed away a great deal more happiness than my little fortune can ever replace. But this is the very best that I can do toward righting the wrong that I have done."

In this act was not Croggs bringing forth fruits meet for repentance? The true penitent is not only sorry for his wrongdoings. He resolves to turn away from them; nor does he stop there, but tries to correct as much as possible the wrong which he has committed.

Our sympathy goes out to Robert Drew and his father, to little Jean and his unhappy mother—all victims of one of America's institutions, the saloon; but how many are in sympathy with Croggs? Is he not also a victim of the same institution? No doubt, many men like Croggs, who have within them the possibilities which would have developed them into useful men, benefactors of mankind, ornaments to the human race, had not circumstances and environment forced them to become agents of destruction.

In her room at New Gate, Miss Grace King read the editorial with thought and feeling too deep for words. How vividly it brought back to her memories of the years now passed—memories of all that was lost to her; memories of their short struggle, and memories of that last day of John Drew's life.

Overwhelmed, she laid the paper aside, rose and walked over to the window. Resting her head against the casement, she looked out. The wonderful witchery of the solemn night wove its spell around her. Great, glittering stars clustered in the heavens. A crescent moon swung high in the eastern sky and threw a weird light along the marble palace next door, and down on the dark evergreen trees of her own garden—on the lilac bush, snow-powdered with splendid, fragrant bloom.

In that wan, mysterious, and melancholy light New Gate was sleeping. Miss Grace's thoughts wandered down the little path to the cabin where she had gotten her first glimpse of lowly life. She wondered how the lonely inmates fared—if all was well with Jean and his beautiful, sad-eyed mother. Her heart beat in tenderest sympathy with those two victims of misfortune and bitter sorrow. She shuddered when she thought of all the two must have had to undergo since her visit to them. Thoughts of the poor, wretched father filled her with pity. Pitiful indeed was the story of that once good life now wrecked by alcohol. How numerous were the stories of others all over the city—all over the country, and would continue so long as that chief curtailer of human happiness was allowed to exist.

As Miss Grace looked out over the slumbering city her heart groaned. But her brave spirit was not one which brooded long in morbid fancies. With penetrating, clairvoyant vision she looked down the vista of coming years (let us hope the distance was not far) and saw the people of her beloved country come into national prohibition as their rightful heritage from the diligent sowing, the faithful prayers, the many sacrifices of the friends of the prohibition cause.

In this new condition she saw millions of young people coming out of schools and colleges, standing on the threshold of actual life, their high ideals and glorious visions unthreatened by alcohol's curse, their hearts full of hope and big with promise, in no danger of alcohol's fatal germ being spread throughout their whole natures, inoculating their ambitions

with its vicious virus, causing the high moral standard to drop—warping and wrenching the whole nature out of its legitimate orbit. The mind of the young would be left free to develop in its natural manner; eyes unblurred by poison, left free to discover opportunities everywhere; ears of sympathy would be attuned to the cries of those who are perishing for the want of assistance; open hearts, which would not want for worthy objects upon which to bestow their gifts; willing hands, which would never lack for noble work to do.

She saw the hands of progress touch the villages, the towns, the cities—the whole country; for all those places formerly occupied by saloons would be displaced by business of worthy character. Under the new condition she saw her country waxing bounteous in wealth—gloriously bountiful in its production of efficient manhood and perfect womanhood.

To consecrate her life to the work which should bring about a realization of this mental vision seemed to Miss Grace at that moment a mission far grander than the conquest of empires, and infinitely more to be desired than the crown and heritage of Solomon.

The night wore on while she planned her work for the coming years. While her brain was at work, she walked back and forth with slow, uncertain steps, like one who, peering at distant objects, sees nothing close at hand. Her beautiful face was pale and fixed —not flushed with the gush of enthusiasm, like the jets of a violent flame, but calm and fixed and full of thought—thought that was a crystallized and consecrated purpose.

At last, when the feeble light of the sinking moon admonished her that the night was growing old, she stopped again to look out over the slumbering city—her heart no longer light, careless, and free, but burdened with grave responsibility.

Miss Grace knew deep down in her heart that the disreputable rum-hole or saloon in the cheaper districts of the city is not the chief place which is responsible for the creation of the "drunken sot"; but it is at the so-called respectable bar, the fashionable rooms at these big hotels, the cafés at men's clubs, the harmless beverages always served at social gatherings in the homes of respectable people—these are the places that are really responsible for the wrecks that are "drunken sots." They invariably get the beginning of their downfall at one or all of these high places before, in the end, they are seen frequenting the low saloons.

The history of nearly every drunkard may be traced back to the first glass in one or the other of these places. Few men ever become habitual drunkards by being induced to take their first drink at a saloon. The first step is taken perhaps in the home, where only a harmless glass of wine is served; or the iniquitous cocktail at the club or café, or in the fashionable bar. The truth, that in these high places is where the big evil lies, forced itself upon Miss Grace.

"Ah!" she said in mournful tones of deep regret, "the greatest responsibility rests upon society. The civilization which begot this evil must destroy it or else be forever branded with the scarlet letter of its own crime."

Being firmly convinced of this, she saw clearly the long, stony path in which she must henceforth choose to labor.

While she stood there her lips moved in prayer: "Be pleased, O God, to make me a fit instrument for thy work; sanctify my heart; quicken and enlighten my mind; let me be endowed with patience, perseverance, and unwavering faith; of all things, let me labor with an eye single to thy glory. Let me not labor for any worldly applause, but for the sole purpose of bringing about righteousness upon this earth. O, my Father, crown my efforts with success in thine own good time—thou knowest best."

The still, solemn splendor of the night spoke to her soul; and out from the depth of the starlit sky there seemed to come a sacred voice which soothed her anxious spirit: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Calm and hopeful now, Miss Grace retired to her rest. Nothing broke the sweet repose which settled upon her quiet spirit. She slept on until out of the whitening east the new day rose, radiant in bridal garments, wearing a single gleaming star upon its pearly brow. Then the sky flushed and the hilltops glowed, and the abundant sunshine streamed over the world once more—streamed over the world in glorious promise of a new fulfillment.

The first rays flashed into Miss Grace's room, falling warm and bright upon her closed eyelids, kissing them to wakefulness and the golden radiance of a new day.

CHAPTER IX

On a beautiful day in July, several years after the death of John Drew, Miss Grace King stood on deck of a great liner which plowed her way up the English channel. For many weeks she had been on a tour about the country. Feeling that a recluse life would give her only partial glimpses of that part of humanity whom she wished to help, she had decided to spend several months in travel, for the special purpose of making a study of peasant life. Her chief purpose in doing this was to gain a thorough knowledge concerning the effects of alcoholism upon the peasants. Having done extensive travel about the United States, she was now about to spend a few weeks in Europe for the same purpose.

As the great liner plowed her way up that historic strip of water toward the Hook of Holland, Miss Grace was struck with the extraordinary spectacle presented to her eyes. The channel was crowded with vessels, ranging from the tiniest submarine to the most ponderous dreadnought. In the narrowest part of the strait, between Calais and Dover, there lay a long line of torpedo boats, gunboats, light cruisers, and destroyers. Unanchored, they extended an unbroken front, like a regiment of cavalry. It was the British fleet, the main line of defense and offense of the empire. As the liner made her way through those floating forts of steel, those who stood on her deck saw in that display only a pageant of peace. The warm sun shone in splendor upon the

spectacle, and the sea slipped past the great liner with a swish of molten gold, while the sky overhead was blue with a hue which can hardly be described.

It was the birthday of King George of England, and the main feature of the celebration was the mobilization and review of the British fleet, the pride of the nation.

It was a spectacle which caught and held the eyes of all the voyagers; but none of those who watched that peaceful scene suspected or even dreamed that in the background of this beautiful picture of pomp and splendor there already lurked the grim brute-visage of war—immediate war, which would involve all Europe and eventually the whole world.

A few days later, at The Hague, wherein is situated the Temple of Peace, while she with other tourists wandered through that magnificent structure of international harmony which the munificence of an American millionaire has given to the world, they had no dreams that at that very moment the ambition of an imperial nation was operating to plunge the world into the most hideous war that has ever been known to civilization.

However, those happy holiday makers were not destined to remain long in ignorance, for not many days passed before they caught rumors of war and were warned to return to America immediately.

August 1st, a few days after Miss Grace's arrival at New Gate, marked the beginning of the world's struggle, when Germany declared war upon Russia. The reader knows that for a period of five months the world looked in wonder upon that nation's almost uninterrupted success; and looked in horror

upon that period of France's greatest peril, and Belgium's supreme agony. We know also that, so far as America's relation in the struggle was concerned, it looked at first upon the European nations' strife with somewhat indifferent eyes; but as the struggle progressed, America began to watch with increasing abhorrence and amazement those methods of war employed by the imperial German government—methods which gave evidence more and more of that government's character and aim.

Soon the time came when American citizens, sailing on American ships, under American flags, were slain by German submarines in absolute and vicious disregard of a nation's rights. Then indeed did America awake to the appalling fact that not only was the freedom of the European nations menaced, but the rights, the liberty of every democratic nation was imperiled by the purpose of these people to rule the world.

We know further that at last America, thoroughly aroused from its dream of peace, becoming fully awake to the dangers which threatened all those sacred ideals for which democracy stands, arose in splendid determination that absolutism must go down in defeat.

So great a national cause naturally evoked the patriotic service of every true American. For a short period the prohibition cause became somewhat obscure before the more vital questions which agitated the country. All America became absorbed in the one great task of winning the war for humanity.

Opportunity for patriotic service rapped upon all doors, from the richest to the poorest. It fell to the

lot of some to make munitions; others, to run ships and railroads; others, to work in the mines and in the forests; others, to plant, cultivate, and harvest, and still others, to fight on land and sea.

Miss Grace King, being a true daughter of America, at once began to take inventory of herself to see what service she could offer that would prove most beneficial to her country.

The most important thing in life is bread, the primeval struggle being always to appease hunger. To the American housewife was consigned the great business of economy. On this one task of the American woman seemed to hang the fate of humanity. Knowing this fact, the housewives arose as a single unit in the great task of conserving the nation's food.

Miss Grace, regarding food conservation as the woman's vital problem, at once formed the determination to do her utmost along that line. Having made up her mind as to the work she intended to do, she plunged into it with religious enthusiasm. After first offering her services to the Woman's Committee, Counsel of Defense, she began to take infinite care in acquainting herself with every possible means of conserving food. She organized a Woman's Home Committee at New Gate, canning clubs and various other clubs of patriotic origin, and began work in real earnest.

The women of New Gate, witnessing the patriotic zeal of Miss Grace, were determined not to be outdone by her; therefore it was not long before every woman in the city, of whatever station, became enamored with the idea of "doing her bit." The season of play and lightsome mood was over for the

woman force at New Gate; the time for sterner thought and vital action had come. Even those most prosperous ones, who had all their lives basked in their conditions of ease, selfishness, and self-complacency, became patriotic to the point of self-denial and personal sacrifice.

During those times New Gate underwent a sort of transformation. The influence of the women's committees penetrated every home, and the spirit, finally taken up by adjoining cities and towns, soon became spread over a vast territory in the South.

In this strenuous time of worldwide strife and turmoil, it seems that the only institution in America which remained deaf to all appeals of patriotism, and which continued to ally with the enemies against those subjects vitally related to the successful prosecuting of the nation's war, was the selfish, unscrupulous liquor traffic. This fact caught the attention of Miss Grace and stirred all her dormant hatred against this curse of the American people. She observed with jealous hatred the continued work of this ruthless industry, took strict notice of the vast amount of the nation's much needed food which it consumed.

"Uncle," she remarked to her kinsman one day, "the desire to continue the fight for national prohibition has been woven into the very warp and woof of my life. I am drawn to it by the irresistible force of my everlasting hatred against alcohol."

She was standing by the window, looking out over the smoking factories, past the thick masses of buildings, over and beyond the restless surge and grind of the city's traffic, to the lovely hills and woods,

where nestled the tiny hut of her friends, Jean and his beautiful, sad-eyed mother. She was silent, thinking of the little family, and of her own blighted hopes. Her fond uncle looked up at her and was moved with compassion. The girl seemed to radiate a new beauty. As he looked at her he thought he had never seen a more perfect profile, nor a countenance that expressed such a beautiful blending of wistful longing, of patient fortitude, and saintly resignation. Hers was the face of a madonna after the crucifixion—pathetic in its lonely sorrow, but inspiring in its spiritual strength and holy in its purity and depth of character. Her beauty was of the kind which is revealed only in the faces of those who have been fortunate enough to have experienced the one grand passion to the utmost bounds of the human capacity—all its exquisite joy, all its exquisite pain, all its tenderness, all its cruelties, all its high idealism, all its broken hopes. This young woman, in that one brief period of her awakened love, from the time that she had opened her eyes that first dazzling instant and the spirit of unbridled, irresistible youth had burned brightly and had completely captivated young Drew, had felt love's keenest delight, its most stinging pain; had sounded its profoundest depths, and found it of a quality that is as sublime as it is human.

Her uncle knew that this great love had proved a blessing to her, for it had been the means of transforming his beloved kinswoman into the being who stood before him now—a woman of broadest sympathies and great kindness of heart. How he wished her mother, his only sister, might have been like her!

Turning her glorious eyes, brimful of hidden purpose, upon him, she said: "Uncle, the Government tells us, and rightly, that saving is a patriotic duty. During these strenuous times every living thing in the United States is feeling the pressure of economy. Increased taxation, the high price of food and clothing, the need of aiding America's soldiers in their self-sacrifice, the complete disarrangement of ordinary industrial and commercial conditions, have made rigid economy necessary. But bearing this yoke of economy gives a sort of pleasure, because we feel that we are doing it for the grand purpose of making all the people and all the resources of the country supremely effective in this fight for humanity. The Federal Department of Agriculture is urging the increase of food production. The United States Food Commissioner is busily engaged in its effort to conserve and control the consumption of food. The food that America saves will go far toward winning the war. The American housewives realize this and are everywhere striving to steer their domestic crafts to the port of wartime economy. In response to the Federal Department of Agriculture, the farmers all over the country are making special efforts to produce full crops from every acre under tillage in the United States. War gardens are being planted, canning clubs organized—all for the purpose of taking care of the nation's food. But there is no doubt that with all our efforts to economize, the food situation, as the months shall advance, is going to become most critical. Proper economy makes it our duty to cut out every expenditure that does not definitely contribute toward American efficiency.

But while all this patriotic response to the request of the authorities is going on, does it seem just and fair that our Federal Government should allow any traffic to exist which persists in manufacturing the nation's much needed food into a poison which robs the country of its efficient manhood and patriotic womanhood, and which continues to strike bread from the lips of our men, women, and children?

"I have been making a special effort to estimate the amount of food which this ruthless traffic is consuming while we are struggling along with our great problem of economy. Of the principal grain crops of the United States, barley, wheat, rye, corn, and oats, it is estimated that the liquor traffic uses annually 2.25 per cent: the grain destroyed by being converted into liquor, if conserved, will save 11,000,000 loaves of bread a day. The brewing of beer alone destroys from fifty to sixty million bushels of grain—and the farmers are urged to produce more grain!"

"There is no doubt about it, Grace, my daughter," said her uncle; "the loss of the liquor industry would mean a tremendous gain in foodstuffs. The prohibitionists are not blind to the fact of this great waste, and are already urging the adoption of national prohibition as a war measure."

"If national prohibition is adopted now, it will be adopted as a war measure exclusively, I suppose," said Miss Grace, thoughtfully.

"No doubt this will be the case," said her uncle. "The Anti-Saloon League deems it unwise to press any further prohibition proposal that might delay the passage of any other important issues. They

believe that the operation of emergency war prohibition will so prepare the public for permanent prohibition that the amendment will easily become operative. And Grace, dear, I think this is a wise step—no doubt, the best step, because, on account of the inevitable strain upon the Government, the attempts of the prohibitionists to force the adoption of permanent prohibition at present would not be good political strategy or statesmanship."

After a long silence, Miss Grace spoke again: "Uncle, I'm wondering what can be done to focus the attention of our Federal Government upon the fact that in this huge, unparalleled job of winning the war, this agent of destruction to both physical and moral forces ought no longer be tolerated; that it is the height of folly to continue to maintain under its protection this oppressive trade, this greatest enemy to America. I wonder what I, a lone woman, can do. If I were only a man!"

"Grace, dear, whatever a woman of your character wishes to do for the welfare of a community or a nation, if she does it with the zeal and religious enthusiasm which you have manifested in all that you have already done, will be far-reaching in its influence. I believe you have the will and the courage to do all that is within your power. Continue to do as you have always done, and ask God to bless every effort you may put forth."

One evening Miss Grace walked back and forth in her elegant library, her thought concentrated upon a manuscript which she was preparing. The room lent its charm to her queenly figure as she moved amid its efficient spaciousness like a goddess within

her habitual temple. There came a timid knock at her door, and she opened it to find Jean of the cabin standing there.

Miss Grace could not avoid remarking the ashen pallor and troubled expression of the boy's face. "What is the matter, child? You look as if you are either ill or dreadfully fatigued. How is the dear mother?" she asked, drawing the boy to a chair and looking anxiously into his wistful face, while she tenderly stroked back the glossy hair from his high forehead. This youth had become very dear to her, like a young brother. Jean's lips trembled, and Miss Grace waited

"My poor father is dead," he said simply, and a great tear stood in each eye. Miss Grace's tender heart was deeply moved. She kissed the boy, whose soft eyes held much misery. Suddenly she left his side and for a long time stood looking out the library window. The sun was just going down behind a fleecy cloud-mountain: great rays of scarlet shot up from its silver rim, while lurid beams of light streamed down toward the horizon. Vacantly her eyes rested on this glorious picture, but its splendor passed away unheeded, for she was looking far beyond the western gates of day and seeing a ghastly, distorted face turned up toward heaven—a coffined corpse ready for its last resting place of dishonor and shame. A slight movement of the bereaved lad roused her and she turned to him again. There was an inner light from her soul shining in her eyes, a look tender, loving, and kind in their clear depths as she drew the boy's head against her breast.

Suddenly she thought of the poor mother alone

with all her deep misery, and bade the boy come with her at once to their little hut. So they hastened to her, whose proud head was bowed almost to the earth under the weight of its grief, loneliness, and shame.

The man had met his death in a tragic, dishonorable way, and the poor, proud wife, thus so sorrowfully humiliated, oppressed with an intolerable sense of desolation and isolation, had sat all day, her aching head pressed close against the window—silent and awed by the terrible loneliness which surrounded her. All through the long hours of the day she had sat there unmoved, like a statue. Interminable seemed the dreary day to her son, who, unable to longer bear the sight of his mother's stony grief, stole away to find his beloved Miss Grace.

The day finally drew to a close and still the poor woman sat there until the red light of day died in the west, and until a young moon hung her crescent among the treetops and the stars flashed out thick and fast. Softly the door opened and Miss Grace and Jean entered.

The young woman drew the bowed head of the older woman to her breast, letting it rest there while she strove to soothe the troubled heart with words of love and comfort. She felt strangely drawn to this mother and child. Out of her own heart there seemed to issue an electric chain of sympathy.

Outside, God's changeless stars looked down upon that lonely cabin where alcohol's cruel hand had added one more crime to its enormous list; one more example of manhood destroyed, another character debauched, the wreck of love and happiness to

another one of America's homes. A deep stillness reigned, broken only by the stifled sobbing of the child. The crescent moon swung low over the tree-tops and threw a weird light down on the cabin with its dead and bereaved ones. Presently through that wan, mysterious, and melancholy light a bell sounded from a distant section of the city.

Gradually Miss Grace's troubled spirit revived and the light of reason pointed further along the stony path before her. Mechanically her hands caressed the bowed head upon her breast, while her countenance became eloquent with determination and with humble gratitude to God for giving her wisdom to choose that path, with grace and courage and strength to pursue it.

"O, my Father!" she whispered, "bless the work which thy servant is doing. Endow me with wisdom and strength to do whatever I can to help lead the way to my country's future peace and happiness."

A few days after the quiet funeral of Jean's father, Miss Grace set out to her uncle's home on a mission of love. It was one of those rare afternoons in September when summer, conscious that her reign is ended, with a final exultant effort brings together all her gorgeous colors and decks the world in regal pomp and short-lived splendor. The shade trees all along the streets stood thus splendidly arrayed, while a strong, steady southern breeze caught the leaves which had fallen and whirled them here and there in a mad, merry dance. Hosts of gay children tripped merrily home from school, and it was a delightful picture to see them darting here and there

in pursuit of some scarlet pinnated beauty which, bewitched with an elfin spirit of wickedness, whirled away at the very moment when the dimpled fingers thought them secure and fast.

As Miss Grace hurried along, the sight of the ruddy-faced boys and girls heightened her determination to be successful in her mission, for it pertained to the future welfare of her little friend. Success in what she had undertaken meant an opportunity for his development and education, at the same time protection from future misfortune. The boy should have a chance to rise above the humiliating station in which society's curse had placed him —a chance to climb up beyond the reach of that subtle menace which threatened to destroy him. A divine smile lit up the young woman's face in the satisfaction of knowing that she was adding another effort to her list of trying to help the struggling poor to better environment, and in so doing repairing her own wrongs to society during that period of her reckless, thoughtless girlhood. O, what a blessed thing it is to feel that you are doing some good in the world: how dim in contrast does the light of sinful pleasure shine to the divine light of usefulness —helping somebody to find life and opportunities in which to grow to perfection!

She found her uncle alone. With a smile of welcome he came to greet her, who, ever since the death of his only son, followed shortly after by the death of his beloved wife, had been the only means of bringing sunshine into his lonely home. He had always loved this daughter of his only sister with a fatherly devotion. From the time that she could

toddle she had been a favorite in his home. The dear wife, having no daughter of her own, had lavished a motherly affection upon this child, who often seemed to prefer their home to her own. And the son of theirs, who through the influence of alcohol had wrung their hearts with grief and bitter disappointment, had been her playfellow all through her childhood and girlhood. After the uncle was deprived of both his nearest and dearest, he naturally turned to Grace for sunshine, love, and comfort.

"How is my daughter getting on with her work?" he asked, smiling genially upon her.

"O, famously, uncle. But there is another very important matter which brings me here to-day—a request which I want you to grant me, uncle." She paused, assuming an air of gravity, while her uncle waited expectantly with the air of a doting father who is ever ready to listen to the request of an idolized son—a request which, even before the asking, the father knows he is going to grant.

"Uncle, suppose the opportunity should come to you to take as a protégé a boy of great promise, of rare intellectual ability—but who is a child of very unfortunate circumstances. Would you do it?"

"Well, that depends, my dear. I shouldn't like to become responsible for the future of a child of a criminal or a drunkard. If the child is the offspring of clean, honest, but poor parents, I shouldn't hesitate to take the responsibility, but—"

"Suppose, uncle, the boy's father is a victim of drink—a misfortune which may be acquired, you know, through a combination of circumstances of

which the poor victim may not be altogether to blame. What then?"

Since her uncle vouchsafed no answer, she continued: "I have never told you about a lad—a family whom I learned to know a few years ago, just after the sad incident at Hollyville, uncle. Since then I've watched this boy, to see his fine nature struggling through the most pitiable conditions in its attempt to come into its rightful heritage of beautiful, efficient young manhood. I have rendered him all the assistance I could without wounding their pride. His mother would accept no further aid than that of providing books for the boy's education. Not that she is a woman who is inculcated with antipathetical ideas regarding people of wealth and high social standing, but she is just one of those women who is too proud to beg and too independent to complain or lament. She is a very remarkable woman, uncle—one of those rare creatures one often discovers here and there among the extremely poor, a woman who naturally carries herself with an air of conscious self-respect which her shabby dress cannot hide, nor a robe of silk could not enhance."

"And the father?"

"The father? O, uncle, another one of those debauched characters, a most wretched victim of alcohol, a poor, wretched fellow who, under the influence of that diabolical curse, has dragged into the very dust the name of—Jean Richter."

"Jean Richter! Grace, my daughter, what is this you are asking of me? What! Take Jean Richter's son under my roof as my protégé? The very idea is preposterous!"

Mr. Anderson arose and began pacing the floor. He knew that this strange request of his niece's was no idle one. But believing that the young woman's great love for humanity and sympathy for the unfortunate and suffering ones had prompted her in this charitable idea, he felt that he must be gentle with her. His restless agitation did not arise from mental debate as to whether he would grant her request, because it never occurred to him to grant it. But his mind was puzzled as to a best method of refusal without hurting her. He was convinced that observation of the misery of these people and the hope that she might be instrumental in relieving it had determined her course.

Presently he stopped in front of the fireplace and leaned his great form against the mantel. The blood throbbed in Miss Grace's heart while she sat waiting.

Instantly the answer had sprung to Mr. Anderson's lips, but he had checked it in order to acquaint her with its negative in the gentlest manner. If she had been anybody else, he would have brought down his fist upon the table with a most emphatic "No!"

At last he came and sat beside her while he said: "Grace, dearest, do not ask me to do that which my reason will not permit. I have seen many phases of human nature, and watched the development of many characters, and have found that the law of heredity is strong—sure. Think of what I have already suffered from the hand of this terrible evil. Grace, this is asking too much of me. The fatal outcome for the boy is inevitable on account of the law of heredity. If my own son with his honest parentage did not escape, what can I hope for this

boy, born with the fatal thirst woven into the very warp and woof of his life? Suppose I should learn to love him, as undoubtedly I would if he is the rare character you say he is. Another disappointment would kill me. You don't wish me to undergo such another ordeal as the first. Grace, my dear, nothing could save the boy from a drunkard's ruin. Experience has taught me that the fate of the inebriate is hopeless. In spite of what this boy's mother is, think what his father was—think, Grace!"

"But, uncle," the young woman pleaded, "I'll admit that Richter was a man of the very lowest type; but was he always so? His wife tells me that he was from one of the best families. He became what he was after Jean was born. Can you hold him exactly responsible for the deeds done under the influence of alcohol? The thing for which I hold him responsible is for allowing himself to take those first drinks, which he knew would perpetuate into debauchery and crime. He ought to be held responsible for his first yielding to temptation, especially if he was wise concerning alcohol's evil effects. He merits punishment for deliberately surrendering his will and intelligence to the drink habit, thus accepting the chance to commit grave crimes. But in the end his own responsibility, as with all drunkards, vanishes and he became a victim of license issued under the sanction of a supreme government.

"I believe that this boy, given the proper environment, will develop into splendid manhood, of which the nation will one day be proud. He certainly shows marked evidence of his blessed faculties: whether they are of maternal or paternal origin, we

are not able to say, nor should it matter. The fact that he possesses them is sufficient. I am sure, uncle, that here, within the pure atmosphere of your home, you will witness the perfect unfolding of this boy's great abilities into usefulness and power, as the sun unfolds into beauty and fragrance the tender petals of a flower."

Mr. Anderson was not unmoved by the young woman's pleading, nor insensible to her logic.

"But, Grace, darling, think of that other life no less promising perhaps—I do not say this to wound you," he said, quickly observing the look of pain which passed over her face—"but I mention it as a sort of reminder, you know. The chances of escape for children born under the best environment are little enough; what could you hope for this child, born with the inherited tendency toward inebriety?"

"Uncle, I do not believe that the appetite for liquor is inherited. This, I know, is contrary to the general belief. I do believe that there is inherited a predisposition to such weakness, so that if the child of drunken parents gains access to alcohol, the appetite is much more rapidly developed than would be with the child of abstaining parents. I verily believe that if the child with the bad heritage abstains absolutely, he will never crave liquor. I do not believe that the appetite for liquor is a natural demand. Naturally the physical being rebels against the first drink of any alcoholic beverages. I have seen (and I blush with shame to say it) green youths sicken with the first drink, many of whom could be traced to drunken parentage. O uncle! I know to my great shame that it is through the social instinct,

through very natural and healthy impulses, that an appetite is engendered, which in turn pays such dividends of ruin to its victim. It makes me shudder to think of how much responsibility lies at my own door for having lured young and innocent men on to the formation of this most disgraceful habit. It is a sin for which I shall give the service of all the rest of my life in atonement. With most young men the habit of drinking liquor originates in social pressure, and the habit is the result of persistent social temptation. Of course, after the habit has once been acquired it is exceedingly probable that the drunkard will continue the practice in order to satisfy the appetite. Once the habit takes possession, alcohol becomes the master and man becomes the slave. After all, the great question, 'Who Is Responsible?' is not a hard one to answer. The false friends of society who bombard the tender youth with alcoholic drinks could answer the question if they would; the wily barkeeper, who picks the pockets of the poor, robs men of their money and honor, who ruthlessly commits crime against the man, the home, the church, the State, and the country, could answer the question. The members of our Federal Government who refuse to enact a law against drunkenness, and allow alcohol to continue to dispense its evil effects throughout the entire population, could answer the question. This boy's father was no more born a drunkard than you or I. His wife tells me that he was once an honest, respectable gentleman. I feel a deep conviction that if we can rescue this boy from the curse of this sin which threatens his life, we will be rendering our

country a service which will be long remembered. The effort is certainly worth while, uncle, and you will agree with me when you learn to know the lad. Give him a trial for my sake, dearest uncle. I will be responsible for his conduct. If he shows the slightest tendency to deteriorate morally, I'll see to it that he is speedily removed from your home."

"Grace, I may seem to be hard—brutal, but I fear that I must be obstinate in this. I couldn't have Richter's boy here! Think of all his being in my home would involve—a host of low kinfolks hanging around—"

"There are no kinfolks but his mother, uncle, and you need fear nothing from that proud, reserved woman."

"You don't know, Grace, what these people of her class will do if you give them a chance. You had better keep them at a greater distance yourself. A certain kind of charity work among them, such as donating funds for the improvement of their school facilities, or for community improvement would be all right; but actually taking them up with all their rags and filth and dirt into your very arms is quite another matter. I'll give these people money—no, I can't think of having Richter's son here!"

Raising her face, Miss Grace looked steadfastly at her uncle, and pain, compassion, dread, and misery filled her soft eyes. The stout heart melted. He had never refused her anything; and she had never asked for anything unreasonable. It seemed that she had never desired anything half so much as that he should befriend Richter's son. Her heart was set upon succoring this child, and he knew it would be

no easy matter to dissuade her from her purpose. Her tremulous, compassionate face showed how very earnest was her wish; and should he refuse to grant it, she would resort to some other means.

Without another word, Miss Grace arose, drew on her gloves, and started toward the door.

Unable to bear the sight of her disappointment and grief, her uncle laid a detaining hand upon her shoulder, saying: "Very well, Grace, I will let you persuade me in this, though it is against my better judgment. Remember, you have asked me to do a difficult thing. Everybody around here knows Jean Richter, and his son's lot is going to be a hard one. I wonder if you are doing the best thing for the boy, after all."

"I have thought of how hard it would be for him at school, therefore I think best to provide for his private education," said Miss Grace.

"Very well. I think this would be the best for all concerned. I'll give the lad employment here in the office, and the salary which I pay him will help support his mother. If the boy proves worthy—well, the future will tell."

"O uncle!" said the grateful Miss Grace, "I can never love you enough for doing this for my little friend. I am sure that you will never regret doing this for him."

"I am doing this for your sake, Grace; but you must bear in mind that life is a long series of disappointments. The failure to meet with your own ideals both in private affairs and in the affairs of the nation is sore disappointment. But such things are inevitable; you must make up your mind to them."

CHAPTER X

ALL was very quiet in the little cabin under the hills. Early dusk and twilight dimly revealed two figures huddled close and silent by the low window. They had been sitting there for hours—the mother holding the form of her darling boy close up against her heart as if she feared that death's cruel hand might tear him from her side. Now and then her body quivered as if in pain. Perhaps she was thinking of the long, weary years of sorrow which stretched out before them—years of crucial suffering and perhaps unfilled hopes. How to support herself and boy was a problem which she must face. Drink had swallowed up almost their last penny. To secure employment that would pay enough to support them both and provide for Jean's education would be almost impossible. It seemed that her husband's dishonesty and crime had blocked every avenue. Jean, suddenly peering up through the semi-darkness into his mother's face, thought he saw tears in her eyes. Very sadly he watched the sweet, sad face with its light of love and devotion; and with his desire to see her happy, free from care, and in perfect safety; with his manly longing to shield her from danger and suffering, his heart was made to feel an anxiety far beyond his years. Presently he laid a timid hand upon her cheek and said, "It is such a blessed thing to love, isn't it, mother?"

A fierce, almost jealous love clutched at the mother's heart.

"I am glad, mother, that I'm big enough to work for you. I shall go over to New Gate and find employment at once—to-morrow."

Mrs. Richter shuddered involuntarily. Life had brought some fair things for her boy in the last few years, in spite of the terror which had constantly hung over them. She had managed in some way to keep things as cheerful as possible, taking infinite care in teaching him to find beauty and sunshine in life in spite of the gloom which overshadowed them. The woods, the fields, the hills, ever abounding in nature's wealth of treasures and pleasures, had been the means of keeping this mother and child above the life of utter despair. Then, at the very time he needed it most, God had sent Jean a new friend, Miss Grace King, from the city. The beautiful friendship between these two had broadened and deepened until the mother had at last consented to allow the young woman to provide books which the hungry soul of her boy needed so. No further aid would she accept, jealously guarding as her own the task of feeding and clothing his precious growing young body.

But now—accepting any aid, or any notice even, from the beautiful young woman, after everything happening as it did, seemed imposition and ingratitude. If she only had somewhere else to go in order to begin again, perhaps her lot would be easier.

"I am sure there is somebody over at New Gate who wants a boy," Jean went on. "We shall not need much—just you and I, mother—you know—now. And we can save so much—now. We won't have to leave here, shall we, mother?" There was

a sort of pleading in his voice which the mother-heart understood. In spite of his father's cruelty and drinking, the boy's life here had been his happiest. He was by nature a child with the homing instinct. To him this little hut was home and he loved it passionately. The mother understood her boy's longing for the hills, the woods, the little spring with the tangled tapestry around it, the friendly squirrels which frisked and leaped among the boughs above his head, the rabbits hopping unafraid in the tall, cool grass and fallen leaves, the gossiping birds, and all the other forms of animal life; his deep longing for mother earth and country life—the life that gives vitality, stamina, courage, and all those other qualities which make for happy boyhood. There was nothing about her boy that this mother did not understand. Suddenly the firm resolve that he should have his wish took possession of her. All at once she was able to glory in the fact that she was to give him at least his soul's desire to remain in the country, in the midst of mother nature's perpetual miracle, where he could not open his eyes without seeing a more magnificent picture than Raphael or Michael Angelo could have created in a lifetime—pictures not only beautiful but perfect, breathing, and throbbing with life.

In this the mother-heart was wise, for during those few years there in the country he had already acquired a rich amount of that superior stamina and mental caliber that makes the stuff which rises to the top in all vocations of life. He already possessed a peculiar quality of superiority which would later be a powerful factor in the shaping of a nation's destiny per-

haps. There was within him a sufficient hunger for knowledge that would stimulate him to self-education. He was ever athirst for learning, having a peculiar yearning to know the history of men and women who had made a nation, to know the history of his country, and above all, he had that all-absorbent ambition to be somebody in the world. At that moment the heart of this mother, coming into full realization of the bigness of her charge, arose out of her condition of perplexity and doubt, and stood ready to take up her burden.

She began by first setting the house in order—making those thousand little touches of taste that were needed to drive the darkness out of the corners and the stiffness and gloom out of the house. She cleaned and polished the dim lamp, cooked a simple and appetizing supper, and sat down with her boy to a table spread with a snow-white linen cloth.

Jean, with a peculiar understanding of his mother's sudden show of bravery, looked at her across the table with eyes which worshiped, eloquent with promise of fulfillment.

They chatted pleasantly over their frugal meal until a knock on the door caused a look of fright to leap into Mrs. Richter's eyes. Instantly both mother and son leaped to their feet.

Again the knock.

Jean started forward, but the mother sprang ahead of him, and instinctively putting herself in front of her child, she opened the door.

"Miss Grace!" Jean sprang forward, his young face beaming his pleasure while with due courtesy he greeted his beloved lady.

"Come in, uncle!" called out Miss Grace to the waiting gentleman outside. The light faded from the faces of both mother and son when they saw Lawyer Anderson. A vague fear filled Mrs. Richter's breast, while complete wonder overwhelmed the child.

"Mrs. Richter, this is my uncle, Lawyer Anderson."

With her characteristic regal dignity, Mrs. Richter greeted Lawyer Anderson, never for a moment losing sight of the fact that the gentleman's keen eyes were in constant scrutiny of her young son.

One glance at the youth, whose magnetic personality was intangible, had sent a peculiar thrill through the man's heart, causing him to experience a sense of relief, as if a great weight which pressed upon him had been suddenly removed. Miss Grace's perceptive genius quickly understood the apprehension in the mother's eyes, so, very tactfully, she made known to her the object of their visit. Lawyer Anderson also explained to her the kind of work he would give her son, for which he promised to pay a liberal salary, to be increased as the boy's efficiency should merit such. He also made known his intention of providing for Jean's private education. Gradually the mother's fear and timidity vanished and she was able to converse with ease and confidence, while her heart swelled with gratitude to these two good people whom God had sent in the very hour of her sorest need. The fact that she would have her boy with her during those hours when he would not be at work was very pleasing to her.

Miss Grace, with her wonderful understanding of human nature, did not think of urging removal from their quiet cabin home, but was already laying secret plans to help this noble woman to make this humble spot a home—a sanctuary of love, filled with that subtle and powerful spirit which affords inspiration to the heart, comfort and contentment to the restless spirit.

"What is your opinion of my friends?" asked Miss Grace, as they pursued their way home.

"They are unusual," said her uncle, thoughtfully. "The boy has great ability, which is strikingly revealed in his charming personality.

"And the mother?"

"She is very beautiful and queenly."

"So beautiful," said Miss Grace, "that one would dread to think of her leaving that quiet country home where she can be so sheltered from the cruel unkindness of the foolish society people here within New Gate. And she is as good as she is beautiful, yet there is about her nothing stiff and narrow or what you might call Puritanic, except it be the purity of her heart and life. I would be the last to take her away from her quiet, simple manner of living. Her greatest ambition is to see Jean properly educated; and she shall have her heart's desire, uncle."

Mr. Anderson watched with some curiosity the process of Jean's development. For the first few weeks his employer left him very much to himself, exacting implicit obedience, but taking care to issue but few commands. He also established and increased his influence over him by showing interest in all his concerns, and at times treating him with

affection, which bound the boy to him as nothing else could have done.

Jean was awed by the great wisdom of his employer, and fascinated by his brilliant conversation, in which he was not yet able to take part, for he was as yet only in that pleasant borderland where, with suspended judgment and ready observation, it was his part to listen and learn and study, and to hold his tongue, regarding it as a positive duty to keep his own opinions to himself, or when questioned, to put them forward with all due modesty and confession of ignorance. This trait of his endeared him to Mr. Anderson all the more; and that gentleman was never so happy as when the boy began to rely less on books and more on him for interest and companionship.

Many weeks passed: still the hearts and hands of America's patriotic sons and daughters applied diligently to the task of adhering strictly to every command from Washington pertaining to the economy of time, labor, money, or food. In the meantime America's curse kept up its ruthless waste, snatching its loaf of bread a day from 15,000,000 American families and handing them in exchange complete ruin to both body and soul, while at the same time it continued to gloat over the swiftness and certainty with which it would wreck the whole land: continued to mock at the hollow hope of the American people for democracy in truth—for peace, happiness, and freedom for themselves and their children when the nation's struggle should be at an end.

All during these times Jean continued to grow

more and more in both physical and mental strength. As even in their sports children seem to be aware of the events which agitate the outer world, so in the quiet of his life of employment and study Jean could not fail to be aware of the great national struggle going on, nor could he fail to take keen interest in it. Life seemed to grow bigger, and he became growingly conscious that there was much indeed to learn. He had come into the realization that there is a living history which can be daily and hourly studied—a history in which we all have a share, our infinitesimal yet priceless share of influence and responsibility.

Therefore the lad was very watchful lest he should do something that might in the least destroy the beautiful confidence which his dearly loved Miss Grace and her uncle placed in him. Not that he was one of those pale, soft, girlish youths with a long face and mushy timidity, which is disgusting; but he was a strong, vigorous, natural country boy, full of self-reliance, energy, and grit, sound judgment and pure nature, which recoiled from anything that weakens, impairs, or pollutes the human mind and body.

Somehow he felt a secret consciousness that he was in a great measure contributing to Miss Grace's effort in providing the reading public with facts taken directly from life—facts which could not fail to show what great possibilities there are for Young America, provided the country can be rid of those polluting evils of society, the greatest of which is alcohol.

In this he was correct, for he was indeed the inspirer of all that was best and true in her writings.

His exalted sense of truth and right, his strict adherence to all that was noble, and marked abhorrence for the ignoble, were her strongest incitement. With her hand clasped in the warm, strong hand of this son of lowly birth but most exalted principle, she was able to put into her articles knowledge of facts exemplified. Through him she was able to throttle the furies whose accursed fingers clutched at Young America in order to destroy.

Mr. Anderson watched with increasing interest and pride the unconscious growth and development of both his loved ones. He was aware of the immense pleasure which his niece found in her work of usefulness. She was forever busy, working in the various well-organized clubs, in the church, in everything which pertained to the improvement of the city. All during those weeks in which she worked so assiduously, so efficiently, she was unconsciously drawing from the faithfulness of her work, from the grand spirit which she carried into it, the high purpose which emanated from her in its performance, a recompense so munificent that her countenance lost a great amount of its wistful longing for all that she had lost in life—those joys which might have been. Her work constantly enabled her to gain in much valuable experience, in fine training, in increased efficiency, in splendid discipline, in self-expression, and in the strengthening of her beautiful character. From time to time newspaper articles appeared in most glowing praise of this young woman's work and beautiful patriotic spirit.

One afternoon Miss Grace was busily engaged in looking over a great stack of registration cards for

the Woman's Home Committee—Council of National Defense. There was a smile of satisfaction upon her face as she noted the great number of these cards signed by the patriotic women of the city. A ray of sunshine stole through the fluttering curtain and made golden ripples upon the floor. Upon the table there lay a magazine—a special copy of an American periodical renowned for the lofty tone of its articles, the asperity of its criticisms, the wholesomeness and cleanliness of its fiction. Within this copy there was an article written by Miss Grace. This article, which was the first of hers to be published in this magazine, had been read with avidity by people all over the country. In it she had aimed an effective blow at alcoholism.

Presently, the cards finished, she settled herself in her comfortable "thinking chair," as she called it, and surrendered herself to a few moments of reverie. Such moments were almost invariably spent in working out some plan or perfecting some philanthropic scheme, or mental scrutiny of a charitable project. But this evening her mind dwelt upon recent occurrences which marked rapid progress toward the secret goal of her heart's desire—national prohibition.

Within the last few months America had learned the lesson that alcohol could not be tolerated among the men who were engaged in the death struggle for liberty. This lesson no doubt had been doubly enforced by America having witnessed the spectacle of Russia abolishing vodga, France suppressing absinthe, and England grappling with its beer problem. The lesson had been enforced to the extent that the

people of America agreed with the Government in its decision to make it a punishable offense to sell liquor to the soldiers. And now the constant cry of the prohibitionists to down the liquor interest and save the nation's grain made it imperative that Congress consider a bill which would make it unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to use in the manufacture of any intoxicating liquor for beverage purpose any perishable or non-perishable feeds, foods, or food materials.

As Miss Grace reviewed the summary of the advance toward the overthrow of her most hated enemy, suddenly a glory illumined the future. The vision caught and held her in a fascinating reverie in which she beheld much of the world's darkness dispelled by sunshine, sorrow dispelled by happiness, that which is base and low and deceitful displaced by the lofty and the true; those things which breed filth and unrighteousness displaced by those things which beget cleanliness and righteousness: the fathers of little children returned from haunts of vice and crime, back to the shrine of prayer at their own hearthstone; womanhood, the glory of America, made divine by the halo of faithful wifehood and sacred motherhood; manhood, the pride of America, purified and exalted by strength of intellect and depth of moral character; youth, the hope of America, vigorous, superbly equipped with physical and mental strength which characterizes the youth who is destined to do great and worthy things in the world—youth endowed with great beauty, not superficial beauty, but heart beauty, soul beauty, which marks the spirit of kindness, helpfulness, and unselfishness—youth, possessed

with character of the superior sort which develops into undefiled manhood and womanhood.

Thus Miss Grace beheld the future in a dazzling glory which lured and charmed. Reluctant to part from the vision, she sat and dreamed on until evening and mellow sunset filled the world with a last glory ere the darkness set in. A knock on the door startled her from her reverie. What could be more pleasant than a visit from her uncle and Jean. There was a certain youthfulness about her uncle as he came into the room. This pleased the young lady very much, and she marked the growing friendship between the man and boy with increasing interest and pleasure. Their friendship proved of immense benefit to both. Under her uncle's guidance Jean was growing rapidly, both mentally and physically, and to a keen observer nothing is more fascinating than to watch this sort of growth. In the anxieties of the national struggles at that time Mr. Anderson was able to interest himself keenly through the frequent contact with a young, fresh, vigorous mind feeling its way into greater things.

The evening was most pleasantly spent. Her uncle and Jean's visit to her home being of limited frequency made those visits all the more pleasurable. They usually came together at those times when Miss Grace's parents were absent, for neither of the two proud people could become quite reconciled to their daughter's and brother's intimacy with "common folks," as they called Jean and his mother.

CHAPTER XI

THE advance toward national prohibition was destined to make another stride in a very short while. As soon as the law was passed making it a punishable offense to sell liquor to the soldiers, the prohibitionist commenced to urge the fact that what is bad for the soldiers is bad for all American citizens, whether they are soldiers or not. Once started in this direction, the whole temperance force combined to keep up the agitation, nor did they languish in the least until Congress passed a resolution embodying an amendment to the Constitution which, if ratified by the separate States, would prohibit the manufacture, sale, transportation, importation, or exportation of all alcoholic beverages. The Constitution itself provided that such an amendment must be ratified by three-fourths of the States by legislative action, and the congressional amendment gave them seven years in which to make this ratification, stating that the amendment should take effect one year after its ratification.

At last the great issue was transferred from Congress and made to become an issue on which the people should have an opportunity to express their will. Although the passing of this amendment marked one of the most effective legislative actions in the whole history of the temperance movement, it served to create a new issue which would bring to exercise the will and mind of the American people to their fullest extent.

The passing of such an amendment raised a new issue in every one of the forty-eight States.

"Uncle," said Miss Grace one day while they were discussing the subject, "this places a double duty upon us—brings us face to face with both our enemies, imposing upon the American people a double duty which means: conducting the forty-eight campaigns on prohibition, and seeing the war against Germany victorious."

"There is one thing which may aid in this twofold duty," said her uncle, thoughtfully; "if the States can be made to see in the ratification of the amendment an opportunity to aid in the war, they can also be made to see that promptness in ratification is essential to that end."

"This is the great work which must be done," said the young woman, earnestly. "As the thing stands now, national prohibition is not effective in the least, for such a resolution does not close a single saloon, nor does it render the sale of liquor illegal. O, uncle! Somebody's got to fight this thing to a finish. I'm certainly going to do my part."

"It is going to be a great fight, my daughter—one that will require statesmanship and leadership of the very highest order, to be able to carry on the prohibition amendment campaign and at the same time refrain from detracting the people's interest from their great duty of helping to terminate this war successfully."

"I believe, uncle, that our State can be made the very first to ratify the amendment."

"You are thinking chiefly of New Gate and the rapid stride she has made toward high idealism; but

remember that New Gate is but a very small portion of the State."

"Yes, I do remember that, uncle, but I also realize that her influence is vastly more far-reaching than her territory. How is Jean these days?" she asked, remembering that she had not seen the lad in several days.

"That boy has no equal. I am proud of him, Grace. A father could not be more proud."

"Anyone looking at that handsome boy, bearing all the marks of good parentage, with those strong features and that refined and sensitive nature, would never dream that his father was who he was, would they?" asked Miss Grace. "It is for his sake and all like him that I am determined to keep up this fight for national prohibiton complete."

During all these years the editor of the Hollyville *Sentinel*, who, immediately after the death of John Drew, wrote the editorial, "Who Is Responsible?" had adhered strictly to his promise that so long as the liquor evil should exist in America he would never fail to use the columns of his paper in denunciation of it. Numerous and forceful had been those articles, in which the author took the most radical stand in favor of prohibition. Therefore, when the prohibition amendment was passed, and his State was the very first to ratify it, he could not help but feel a secret satisfaction in the knowledge that he had been most faithful to his promise. He also had the secret belief that the relentless fight which he had carried on through his paper was largely responsible for the prompt ratification by his State.

There was great rejoicing over the State's action,

and the pages of the *Sentinel* were eloquent in praise of the people for taking the lead in the final stride for national prohibition. The *Sentinel* paid special tribute to the faithful activity of the pastor of the church where the Drews had worshiped. Since the death of John Drew, this minister had striven to make his entire church a solidified, active, aggressive, and obedient unit in the warfare on intemperance. He had been most successful in this attempt, for total abstinence in its membership had been the result.

To Dr. Morris, the old family physician of the Drews, it also paid a glowing tribute for the manner in which he had faithfully established the facts that, contrary to the general belief, alcohol has a very small place in medicine: that alcohol when taken into the system acts as a definite poison to the brain and other tissues, and that the effects of this poison are directly or indirectly responsible for the greater portion of the insane, epileptic, feeble-minded, and many other forms of mental, moral, and physical degeneracy: that either as a food or as a drug, alcohol is of no service, and that it is a virulent poison which should be placed on the list with arsenic, mercury, and other dangerous drugs, and that a system of legislation should be enacted whereby the sale and use of alcohol should be prevented and prohibited.

Although their State had been the first to ratify the amendment, the prohibitionists of Hollyville did not consider their work ended. They realized that they had only made a very effective beginning in the fight. Therefore, for the purpose of discussing plans which might prove beneficial in conducting a

further campaign, they appointed a meeting, to which they invited Lawyer Anderson, Miss Grace King, and several others from New Gate and other towns and cities.

"Our safety lies in going forward," wrote the editor of the *Sentinel*. "If we stop now, we stand in danger of losing all we have gained."

The day before Miss Grace was to leave for Hollyville was so beautiful that she decided to run out to Peace Villa (the name which Jean had given their dear home up in the woods) and see Mrs. Richter. The faintest trace of approaching spring was in the air, and as she went along the path she thought of that very first day, years ago, when her wandering footsteps had led her to discover the little hut and its interesting family. She recalled how the cabin had sprung into view at the sudden turn of the road a few yards ahead. Her heart leaped in exultation when she thought of what that turn in the road would reveal to her to-day. She quickened her pace in order to gain sight of the house, and at the proper angle it leaped into view and seemed to beckon her with a triumphant smile of welcome.

"It is perfect!" she breathed while she stood watching it nestled there among clinging vines and hardy shrubbery—amidst a sort of peaceful repose which seemed ever to rest like a benediction upon it.

An intense desire burned within her heart—a deep yearning for a house like that, on the edge of something that was grand and close to nature—something wonderful yet real.

"Spring in such a house would be divine," she whispered. "Spring—a husband and little children to toddle in the dear little path cutting its way so cleanly through the velvet grass—children to romp on the level stretch of lawn at the foot of the sloping background of low hills and graceful trees."

She could almost see the riot of color in the darling garden in front of the house—a profusion of yellow jonquils, crocuses, violets, and lilacs; and sweet, sweet roses; the hundreds of little wild beauties upon the lawns; the gleam of white dogwood blossoms among the trees in the background. With a little catch of breath she suddenly clasped one hand over her left side to soothe the ache of longing in her heart, then went on up to the house.

Joy swept over her when the door opened and Jean's beautiful mother stood there with a smile of welcome. "O, if more dear mothers could be like that!" was Miss Grace's inward thought, and she looked lovingly at this woman so beautifully endowed with purity, intelligence, simplicity of manner, and dignity of bearing—in fact, was all that a perfect mother should be. What a wonderful woman—to have maintained her loveliness, her superior intelligence in spite of the wilderness of trials through which she had struggled; who had not allowed poverty nor social standing to paralyze her ambition to improve herself in every way she could, so that now she was able to surround her home with an atmosphere of refinement, culture, and purity.

"I was expecting you to-day," she said in her charming, soft voice. "Jean is away just now—off down yonder somewhere," she continued, pointing

toward a long stretch of deep, cool woods. "Spring is in the air, and he's sure to find the first violet—he always does."

"I wonder if there's any place on earth half so beautiful as this," said Miss Grace, as she went about from room to room and noted the exquisite taste which made the whole interior of the house a sort of alluring personality. The place was indeed lovely—not with the cold, soulless elegance abounding in high-priced furniture, fine paintings, rare collections of art in the form of artful nudities; but clean, chaste, simple elegance, such as intelligence and refinement can impart to the most humble cabin —a radiance of beauty which a rich and noble spirit will cast over the humblest home, regardless to situation—a perfection which the upholsterer and decorator can never approach.

A deep thankfulness filled the young woman's heart. She felt that having restored peace and happiness to this good woman was a sort of reparation for some of those thoughtless, frivolous actions of her own girlhood. What a blessed thing it was to be able to bring sunshine instead of shadows to the lives of people!

Miss Grace was very proud of Jean, loving him as a young brother. Indeed, the youth was one to be proud of and worthy of anybody's love and admiration. Everybody liked him who knew him. The people of New Gate had almost abandoned the habit of looking at him askance because of his lowly birth. They liked him because he was original and not quite like the rest of the world: fresh and unspoiled, superior in intellect, but void of the smallest

particle of conceit. Many of them were sometimes amazed how he would dexterously avoid doing anything which was low and mean, and how he religiously strove to merit the goodwill, confidence, and approval of his employer, whom he reverenced; and how above all he loved Miss Grace King and adored his sweet mother.

In spite of Jean's youth, he had already begun to show keen interest in the affairs of the nation. His interest in political events was growing so keen and strong that it was no longer possible to remain silent. When he returned from his ramble in the woods and found his beloved Miss Grace there with his mother, the fact pleased him very much. But there was an air of perplexed gravity about the boy which Miss Grace did not fail to notice. Perhaps his passion for books and reading was being overindulged.

"Jean, what are you reading these days?" she asked, noticing the magazine he had in his hand and had evidently been reading.

He handed it to her, saying as he did so: "Miss Grace, this is a very great country in which we live. I'm intensely interested in the splendid spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice the people of this country are exhibiting in this time of national trial. It makes me regret that I am not more advanced in years so that I might have a hand in my country's fight for humanity and right."

"My son has been regretting his years very much of late," said Mrs. Richter. "He, like the rest of us, is very anxious to 'do his bit.' He has already bought a Liberty Bond, and now his patriotic young

soul is seeking broader avenues of usefulness to his country."

Miss Grace went to the dear boy and, placing both her hands on his broad young shoulders, said: "Jean, dear, you are doing more for your country than you realize. Every day you are making yourself an example of what young America should be. Every day of your life you are paying a magnificent compliment to America's effort to produce ideal, capable, efficient men, who are to hold the highest places in the future—men whose principles of right, honest, lofty idealism shall create a new era when this war is ended. You are demonstrating to the world what sober America can be. Ah! be satisfied that in this you are 'doing your bit'!"

The young woman was not mistaken in saying this, for the coming years would prove the truth of her statement, when this boy, born under the curse of America's greatest evil, but liberated and reared in the blessed atmosphere of sobriety and purity, should become a man of whom America would be most proud because of being able to boast of him as one of the grandest combinations of heart, conscience, and brain beneath her flag. And it would become the proud boast of New Gate that this leader of men, whose spotless character had become the dowry of the nation, snatched the name of Jean Richter, which alcohol trailed in the dust, and made of it a name ever to be remembered, loved, and honored.

The meeting at Hollyville proved to be most interesting. It was well attended by prohibitionists from all over the State, and many from adjoining States. In all the Southland there has never been a

more effective meeting of its kind. It proved to be most beneficial in that it gave those who attended the opportunity to form into an effective unit for the grand purpose of making a final and successful warfare against the liquor industry in America.

A few weeks after this meeting there appeared in one of the leading magazines of the country an article written by Miss Grace King. This article, in which her purest thought, her holiest aspirations, her grandest and noblest spirit of patriotism were expressed, was prized by the prohibitionists of America as among the most effective factors in the final victory.

Ruthlessly she assaulted America's pet, soft-footed, velvet-masked folly of society, demanding that all intelligent Christian citizens pause in their headlong career, then decide once for all whether a God-fearing nation, under the white banner of the Christian religion, would further tolerate this mortal enemy of peace and order, this despoiler of all that is best in man.

The following paragraphs of her article made a fitting and effective closing:

"The time has come at last when the great question, 'WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIQUOR EVIL?' hangs in letters of scarlet before the eyes of every American citizen, and the long-standing issue must be settled once for all—NOW!

"The world no longer remains blind to facts concerning alcohol—facts too often vindicated by living examples, and facts which have been proven beyond doubt. The world knows that greater calamities are

inflicted on mankind by intemperance than by any other scourge. Facts to prove this have been discovered, reported, and established beyond all controversy.

"For these, if for no other reasons, the American people must eradicate this evil; and, in view of the fact that no attempt to regulate it has been successful, the only thing which remains to be done is to eradicate the evil, root and branch. For so long as it exists, all classes are in danger of becoming its victims. It is an evil genius which may bring the most exalted down to wallow in filth and rags.

"But there are still other reasons why America should no longer tolerate the liquor evil. Our country is at war: the eternal principles of justice, freedom, and right—those sacred ideals upon which America was founded—are in jeopardy. It is a holy heritage that we have been called upon to defend. America is now in the struggle which means life or death: every American is facing the supreme test—the test of souls and brains. The genius that does not enlist for victory is treason. Wealth that is not funded for the great cause is spurious. Every American who is not giving the very best of every ability for the purpose of winning this victory for humanity is disloyal. Every American mother who shrinks from allowing her son to shoulder arms in defense of freedom and honor is a coward. Every expenditure that does not contribute to the nation's task of winning the war is CRIMINAL! Any industry that steels itself against these facts, and steals those vitals which give life and strength to the men who are engaged in the fight for justice and clean hopes of

freedom and equal rights for all men is a THIEF and ROBBER!

"The cost of the liquor industry to the American people may be divided into two broad streams of waste. Money spent for intoxicating drinks is lost—being money spent with no profit received. The poverty, crime, insanity, and idiocy, which is the loss of America's efficiency and lives, is an unpardonable, irretrievable loss. Statistics show that the expenditure at retail for intoxicating drinks in the course of one year in the United States is estimated at from $124,607,519 to $2,290,000,000.

"This black-handed dealing with the American people has been going on for many years, and these facts represent money received by that traffic and that which is worse than no value returned. Think of the enormous price we have had to pay for maintaining so corrupt and oppressive trade. This foolish indulgence on the part of Christian men and women must cease!

"Then, too, O Americans! behind this great problem of winning the war for humanity and liberty stands the greater problem of preparing America for freedom. Liberty stands at the risk of being grossly misunderstood by the masses, who will attach the narrowest definition to the term. America must take care lest, treading upon the heels of victory, there shall come other forms of oppression; and to-day there exists no greater form of menace within all America's boundary than alcoholism.

"There is nothing that has brought more corruption into politics than alcohol. Now is the time to pave the way, so that in the efficiency of govern-

mental administration, America may stand unsurpassed: so that this country may be a land of limitless resources wherein every boy and girl under her floating colors may have equal chance to reach the topmost round of the ladder of prosperity, power, and honor. Then, and not until then, will America be restored to its original great spirit of unity and Christian brotherhood. If we would make this country worth living in when the war is over and victory is ours, let the people decide—let the States ratify the amendment. This thing must be done if we hope to purify these avenues of peace. If drunkenness interferes with efficiency in war, will it not interfere with efficiency in peace? When the war is ended and the nation's soldiers return from the perils which they have been called upon to face on land and on sea, let them not return to find that alcoholism with its mighty power stands waiting with new opportunities to debauch and destroy that which love and pride and self-sacrifice have won for them.

"There are some who deny the evil which alcohol has wrought, and claim that the sale of it should not be suppressed because of interfering with the personal rights of the individual. The 'personal rights' plea is perhaps the strongest argument advanced by the anti-prohibitionists. The 'personal rights' plea is not only weak but portrays a selfishness that any true American would be ashamed of. The consideration of public welfare overshadows the rights of an individual. Any man who puts himself in a position to injure others in any way ought to be punished. Any industry or traffic which menaces society should be suppressed.

"Is there one who questions the right of the Government to prescribe wheatless days and meatless days, and to actually restrict our diet in order that our own and allied soldiers should be benefited? Do you stand up and contend that, in spite of our soldiers' needs, you will not comply with the country's request because it interferes with your individual rights? Such an argument is just as reasonable as the 'personal rights' plea of the anti-prohibitionists.

"For the sake of humanity we are engaged in a great international struggle, and, for the sake of humanity, we are also engaged in a national struggle. I pray that every American will cease the selfish clamor for individual rights long enough to listen to the appeal that humanity is making to you. Hear the cries of the children in the tenement districts of nearly every large city in this country: they cry for food, clothing, and shelter; they are children whose fathers believe in exercising their personal rights to the extent that the greater portion of their money goes for drink instead of food and raiment.

"Hear the cry of the widow, who prays not only for the protection of her country from absolutism, but prays for the protection of her boy from that most dreaded curse, ALCOHOL.

"This is the supreme hour; we stand face to face with the Liquor Demon! Strike the fatal blow now, lest in the years to come we find our chaste hopes of liberty and freedom dragged at the chariot wheels of BACCHUS, god of WINE!"

. . . . . .

The future! Who can tell what to-morrow may bring forth? New and better conditions are bound to be formed out of this enormous caldron in which twenty nations are commingled. When we look down the vista of the coming years, what a glory breaks upon the vision! In it we see national prohibition made sure and secure through the ratification of the amendment. Further, we see the nations' crises passed and the triumph of democracy over autocracy. We see America's sons returning from the battlefields rejoicing in the victory for liberty. And we see those valiant soldiers who have waged the long warfare for temperance rejoicing in the fact that they have won for America national prohibition as a crowning glory and a richest blessing!

THE END.

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